

Attendance policy



Created by Jo Higham: Vice Principal in charge of attendance
January 2024

Last reviewed on: January 2024

Next review due by: January 2025

Contents

1. Aims
2. Legislation and guidance
3. Roles and responsibilities
4. Recording attendance
5. Legal sanctions
6. Strategies for promoting attendance
7. Reducing persistent and severe absence
8. Monitoring arrangements
9. Links with other policies
10. Appendix 1: attendance codes
11. Appendix 2: The college process in stages
12. Appendix 3: referral checklist
13. Appendix 4: attendance support plan

1. Aims

Attendance = learning = progress = achievement

All staff at Moat Community College are fully committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

3.2 The principal

The principal is responsible for:

- 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs Jo Higham and can be contacted on 0116 2625705 or jhigham@moat.leicester.sch.uk

3.4 The Attendance Manager

The attendance manager is responsible for:

- Supporting the YACs and AYACs with home visits
- Liaising with the YACs and AYACs regularly over current cases
- Holding a formal panel meeting with parents at Stage 4 of our attendance process
- Filling in the attendance support plan
- Updating the senior leader in charge of attendance on current cases

3.5 The attendance admin support

Attendance admin support is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Informing YACs and AYACs of any issues within their year groups
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the YACs and AYACs in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.6 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office at the beginning of every lesson/tutor period.

3.7 Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30 am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return

- Provide the college with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the college day
- Avoid going on holiday in term time

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

- Arrive every day before 8.30 am
- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each day and at the beginning of every other lesson. It will mark whether every student 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 also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive by **8.30am** every day.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the college of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by **8.30 am** or as soon as practically possible by calling the college on 0116 2625705.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the college has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the college may ask the student'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 college 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.

4.3 Planned absence

Absence will be categorised as follows:

- **Medical/dental appointments (M)**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. They can do this by showing evidence of the appointment to main reception or by ringing the college in advance. However, parents/carers are advised to make medical or dental appointments outside of the college day wherever possible. Where this is not possible, students should attend for part of the day.

- **Other Authorised Circumstances (C)**

This relates to occasions where the cause for absence is due to exceptional circumstances, for example a family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison or an agreed part time timetable.

- **Externally Excluded (E)**

Exclusion is counted as an authorised absence. Students will be asked to join online lessons.

- **Family Holidays (H) and Extended Leave**

Parents/carers are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to remove their child from the college during term time for the purpose of a holiday.

- **Religious observance (R)**

One day is given for religious observance.

The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be "exceptional circumstances." Each request will be considered individually and will take into account the following factors:

- Length of proposed leave
- The student's general attendance record

- Proximity of GCSE exams
- Student's ability to catch up on the work missed
- The student's educational needs
- The welfare of the student
- Circumstances of the request
- Previous term time holidays taken

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code, and will be issued with a same day 30-minute detention.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Procedures with regard to punctuality are as follows:

Students arriving after 8.30 am go through the student entrance and are signed in. After 8.40 am they should go straight to Main Reception.

Students who are regularly late will be placed on a punctuality report and parents will be contacted. Students who are of a concern because they are persistently late will have their cases discussed with the EWO with regard to further action.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend the college does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the college will:

- Text the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the college cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the college may conduct a home visit
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the college will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Parents can check their child's attendance via WEDUC and Go4schools.

The college will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.....

5.2 Legal sanctions

The college or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from the college, 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
- Where an excluded student 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

We promote attendance in the following ways:

- Having a clear policy on our website
- Sending parents regular reminders about the importance of regular attendance
- Holding regular assemblies promoting the importance of regular attendance
- Maintaining a whole college culture that promotes the benefits of regular attendance
- Having robust procedures to follow up on absence

Appendix 2 shows our attendance process in full.

7 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The college will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the college (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Fill in an absence support plan
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance (see Appendix 2 for full details of this process)

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and annually by Jo Higham, senior leader in charge of attendance. 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
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

Appendix 2: Our process in stages

January 2024

This is a working document which clearly sets out the process for improving attendance.

STAGE 1: EXPECT

At Moat we aspire to high standards of attendance from all students and we build a culture where all students can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the college. We do this by:

- Providing a clear attendance policy for parents
- Promoting the importance of regular attendance
- Having robust procedures in place for following up absence
- Getting to know our families and community and understanding the barriers they face

STAGE 2: MONITOR

We 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. YACs and AYACs do this by:

- Scrutinising weekly attendance data for their year group and identifying any potential issues
- Sharing any concerns with the senior pastoral leaders for each key stage

STAGE 3: LISTEN, UNDERSTAND AND FACILITATE SUPPORT

When a pattern is spotted, we discuss with students and parents, listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them. YACs and AYACs do this by:

- Inviting parents in for an informal meeting to see how the college can help and support
- Identifying any potential barriers
- Conducting a home visit
- Establishing any attendance push factors (anything that influences the student to attend)
- Identifying any potential safeguarding issues and informing a member of the safeguarding team
- Signposting parents to external support agencies if/where needed
- Monitoring for signs of improvement in attendance following all of the above
- Liaising with our Attendance Manager and the senior leader in charge of attendance

PAPERWORK: voluntary phase referral checklist to be completed by YAC/AYAC on Teams

STAGE 4: FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, we work with all partners 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 a parenting contract or education supervision order. We do this by:

- Inviting parents in for a formal panel meeting with the AYAC/YAC and our Attendance Manager (and the senior leader in charge of attendance where necessary)
- Completing an attendance support plan

PAPERWORK: Our Attendance Manager will fill in an attendance support plan on Teams

STAGE 5: ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education. We do this by:

- Escalating the case to the Local Authority for a penalty notice and possible court action

Appendix 3: Voluntary phase referral checklist

Moat Community College

Student unauthorised absence – voluntary phase referral checklist. This form will be completed by the YAC/AYAC at Stage 3 of our process: LISTEN, UNDERSTAND AND FACILITATE SUPPORT.

The DfE expectation is that before involving **Education Welfare**, schools will have:

- worked to build strong relationships with families,
- listened to and understood the barriers to attendance and,
- worked with families to remove them.

Where voluntary support has not been successful or not been engaged with, and where school view is that statutory intervention is appropriate, school to complete checklist and share with EWS.

Where there is no detailed assessment and action plan, please note that unless there is a good reason not to do so, an appointed home visit will be required in this, or the previous half term to proceed with this referral.

One form per family:

Date:	
School:	
Name of YAC/AYAC:	
Name of parent 1:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Name of parent 2:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Any absent parent with PR	

Address:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Any reason why any parent above shouldn't be contacted? Please provide details:	

Please include all children in the family who are on the school roll.

Child's name	Dob	Academic Year	Attendance % year to date	No of unauthorised absences in last 4 school weeks

Please provide as much evidence as possible to support your request for EWS involvement:

General	(Y/N)	Evidence / information (include key dates)
Have you made first day telephone calls? Texts? (Yes/No)		
Have letters been sent to share concerns in line with school policy? (Yes/No)		
Have you met with the parent/s and discussed non-attendance? Date/s? Reasons provided for the absence.		
Child/ren spoken with (in confidential space)? What reasons have they shared with you? Date/s?		

Child/ren – health and wellbeing	(Y/N)	Evidence / information (include key dates)
Are child(ren) missing certain days? Is there a pattern? (Provide info.)		

Child/ren – health and wellbeing	(Y/N)	Evidence / information (include key dates)
Has illness been given as main reason for absence? If so, has the school contacted the GP/consultant, with parents' consent, to request further information?		
Child/ren suffering from anxiety? If so, have parents been advised to seek a referral to CAMHs via their GP? Are CAMHs involved?		
Is the child a Young Carer? If so, is this having an impact on their attendance? If so, what support has been offered?		
Any behavioural issues? If so, which services have you referred to? Link SEND teacher? Education Psychologist? Details.		
If an EHCP is in place, are the outcomes being supported? When was EHCP last reviewed?		

Parent/s - responses to concerns	(Y/N)	Evidence / information (include key dates)
Action plan drawn up with the parent/s (and child/ren where appropriate) with a review date? Details.		
Have any referrals to other agencies been offered to the parent/child/ren? What was the response? Which other professionals are involved?		
Parent/s engaging with school? i.e. taking telephone calls, attending meetings, calling in with reasons for absence, present for		

Parent/s - responses to concerns	(Y/N)	Evidence / information (include key dates)
appointed home visits? Details.		
Where support has not been successful or not engaged with, has an appointed home visit been undertaken? Details.		
Parent/s proactive in working to address attendance concerns? Details.		
Parent/s following advice given by school and involved professionals? Details.		
Parent/s giving consent for referrals to be made by school to support services? (Consent not needed for referral to EWS.)		

Once complete, save as a word document.

Share completed checklist with Leicester City Council EWO.

Additional information required:

- Copy of record of any meetings with family in last six months
- Copy of any assessment forms completed with child/family in last six months which relate to attendance concerns.
- For non-engaging parent, copy of appointed home visit letter (most recent)
- Up to date attendance certificate for the current school year

Date shared with EWO:

Method: email / shared drive (delete as applicable)

Appendix 4: Attendance Support Plan

Moat Community College Attendance Support Plan

This document forms part of our process for improving attendance. It will be filled in by our Attendance Manager at Stage 4 of our process: FORMALISE SUPPORT.

SECTION 1	PUPIL DETAILS	
	Name:	
	Year group, Tutor/Form group etc:	
	Any other key info:	
SECTION 2	ATTENDANCE SUPPORT MEETING	
	Date of meeting:	
	Attendees:	Role:
SECTION 3	ATTENDANCE DATA ANALYSIS	
	<i>For example: current attendance %, any patterns of absence, lateness, summary of reasons & explanations</i>	
SECTION 4	ATTENDANCE PUSH FACTORS – influences that push the pupil towards attending	
	<i>Strengths & interests the plan could use to engage the pupil, for example: positive relationships in school (staff and pupils), subject strengths, specific positive behaviours shown, rewards & praise received, extra-curricular participation, engagement with other support agencies</i>	

--	--

SECTION 5

ATTENDANCE PULL FACTORS – influences that pull the pupil away from attending

Identify areas of difficulty that may prevent good attendance, for example: travel or housing issues, morning routine conflicts, subject specific barriers, young carer responsibilities, bereavement, bullying or friendship issues, peer pressure, language barriers, recurring illness or injury, SEN, anxiety, diet, exclusions/behaviour

--	--

SE GROUP MIND MAP – Who or what could help?

Which staff, family, friends, services, agencies or organisations could provide the support needed? Consider both push and pull factors. For example, if a music teacher is a push factor, can arrangements be made for the pupil to access their lessons? Other examples: School nurses, Connexions, parenting support, KOOTH, GP.



SECTION 7 **EARLY HELP**

If applicable, explain how Early Help or Targeted Youth work could support the family. Targeted Youth can work with young people aged 13-19 years and where work begins before a young person reaches 19, if they have SEND, this can continue until they turn 24. Would parent/carer wish to have a joint conversation with Early Help to see what support may be available? Would parenting support session or advice help? Record the parent/s and pupil's thoughts and responses. If support is declined, detail a full explanation why.

SE **AGREED SCHOOL ACTIONS**

For example: referrals to be made, adjustments to the curriculum or classes, phased return plan or temporary part-time attendance, identification of a mentor, supporting participation in extra-curricular groups, careers advice, implementation of rewards etc

Staff signature/s:

AGREED PARENT ACTIONS

For example: morning & bedtime routines, limiting technology (When? How?), booking GP appointment, seeking support from SENDIASS, implementation of rewards & sanctions (What will they be?), communicating with the school in line with attendance policy, consenting to referrals etc

Parent signature/s:

AGREED OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIONS (WHERE INVOLVED IN MEETING)

SECTION 9		
	Professional signature/s:	
	AGREED PUPIL ACTIONS	
	<p><i>For example: morning and bedtime routines, screen time, engagement with other agencies, work with school nurse/SENCo/counsellor/FSW/Connexions etc, participation in extra-curricular activities, speak to an identified member of staff with concerns, complete homework, attend in correct uniform etc</i></p>	
	Pupil signature:	
PUPIL ATTENDANCE TARGETS		
<p><i>For example: no unauthorised absence, to increase attendance to 90% by the end of term, to arrive on time every day etc</i></p>		

SECTION 10	IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW
	Start date: <input type="text"/> Review date: <input type="text"/>
	REVIEW MEETING NOTES – date of review: