



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

**St John Fisher Catholic
High School**

School:	St John Fisher Catholic High School
Date adopted by Governing Body:	March 2018
Signed (Chair):	Mr D Mallin
Signed (Headteacher):	Mrs A Rigby

Produced by:	Mr S Coyle
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Date to be reviewed:	Comments:
Every 3 years	

At St John Fisher High School we will ensure that at every level, in all our work and throughout all aspects of School community and its life, all will be treated equally, with respect and dignity, free from discrimination and harassment. Each person will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, race, religion or belief, appearance, health conditions, home or personal situation, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity (refers to staff / employment), socio-economic background and special educational needs. Our School will tackle the barriers, which could lead to unequal outcomes for these protected groups, ensuring there is equality of access and that we celebrate and value the diversity within our School community. The School will work actively to promote equality and foster positive attitudes and commitment to an education for equality.

RATIONALE

St John Fisher Catholic High School is committed, through its Mission Statement, to creating a learning environment where all our pupils feel valued, worthwhile and welcome, and in which they feel safe and secure.

For a pupil to reach their full potential, regular and punctual attendance is essential. Pupils who are absent from school miss out on important teaching and learning opportunities and would leave them vulnerable to falling behind. Regular attendance and excellent punctuality are important life skills and there is extensive documented evidence which demonstrates the strong correlation between excellent attendance and academic success. Poor attendance is not only a recognised barrier to achievement, but it can also undermine the ability of pupils to develop relationships with other children and form lasting friendships.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and learning. We recognise the key role of a parent/guardian in supporting their child's learning and in continually encouraging them to achieve the highest standards of attendance. The school is committed to working in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure all our pupils achieve good attendance and punctuality.

We consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/guardians the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

This policy should be considered alongside other related policies in school, which are:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs/Disability Policy

AIMS

- To establish and maintain regular attendance and excellent punctuality for all pupils to ensure continuity of learning
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for pupils, parents/guardians, all staff and governors

- To clarify roles and responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality and to ensure a consistent and systematic approach across all year groups
- To ensure all attendance procedures are effective and consistent
- To ensure there is a systematic approach to collecting and analysing attendance and punctuality data
- To reward regular and improved attendance and punctuality and to impose sanctions, in line with the school's behaviour for learning policy, where appropriate
- To promote and further develop effective working relationships with parents/guardians and to provide support, guidance and advice in order to bring about improvements in attendance and punctuality
- To ensure the school meets its statutory duty to monitor the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and follows the guidelines on attendance as laid down by the DfE (Appendix 1)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors will:

- Ensure that the value and importance of regular attendance and excellent punctuality is promoted to pupils and their parents/guardians
- Ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to staff, parents/guardians and pupils
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to record, report and monitor the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- In consultation with the Headteacher, set realistic but challenging attendance and punctuality targets
- Receive termly reports on attendance and punctuality

The Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance and punctuality will:

- Have a strategic overview of attendance and punctuality across the whole school and be responsible for leading on attendance and punctuality improvement strategies
- Coordinate with the lead governor for attendance to monitor the implementation of this policy, measure its effectiveness and conduct a regular review

- Oversee all rewards and sanctions relating to attendance and punctuality
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality is a high priority within the school community
- Ensure that registration procedures are carried out efficiently and in accordance with Pupil Registration Regulations (Appendix 2)
- Ensure that appropriate training is provided for all staff
- Foster positive working relationships with all staff, pupils and their parents/guardians
- Ensure specific attention is given to pupils from vulnerable groups so that they receive appropriate support
- Ensure that there are clear and effective procedures for the collection and regular analysis of attendance and punctuality data
- Provide termly updates on attendance and punctuality for staff and governors
- Ensure relevant data is provided to the LA and DfE

Pupil Support Manager will:

- Together with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), have a strategic overview of attendance and punctuality across the whole school, including rewards and sanctions relating to attendance & punctuality
- Oversee daily administration for absence and first-day contact, incorporating the use of Truancy Call
- Ensure that morning and afternoon registers have been completed accurately each day
- Impress upon pupils and their parents/guardians the importance and value of regular attendance and excellent punctuality and arrange meetings where there are attendance and/or punctuality concerns
- Hold regular meetings with HOYs and Pastoral Support staff to discuss attendance and punctuality matters
- Provide regular attendance and punctuality updates for FTs, pupils and parents/guardians
- Assist Pastoral Support Workers and HOYs in contacting parents/guardians where there is an unexplained absence
- Liaise with form tutors, Heads of Year, Senior Leadership and external agencies to coordinate support for pupils and parents/guardians
- Foster positive working relationships with pupils and their parents/guardians
- Ensure there is effective early intervention to ensure high standards of attendance and punctuality for all pupils
- Produce attendance and punctuality reports for Governors, SLT and HOYs
- Ensure there is a focus on the attendance and punctuality of all pupil groups

- Conduct 'home visits' where appropriate

Head of Year (HOY) will:

- Oversee the attendance and punctuality of all pupils in their year group
- Oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately
- Impress upon pupils and their parents/guardians the importance of regular attendance and excellent punctuality and make them aware of school policies and procedures pertaining to attendance
- Instil in pupils a sense of personal responsibility for attending school every day and on time
- Foster positive working relationships with pupils in their Year group and their parents/guardians
- Analyse attendance and punctuality data to identify patterns and causes of absence and lateness
- Work in close cooperation with external agencies to secure improvements in attendance and punctuality
- Liaise regularly with the Pupil Support Manager and SLT link to secure improvements in attendance and punctuality
- Ensure pupils and their parents/guardians receive appropriate guidance and support

Form tutors (FTs) will:

- Ensure the register for morning registration is taken accurately on SIMS via Lesson Monitor and in accordance with Pupil Registration Regulations (Appendix 2)
- Impress upon pupils and their parents/guardians the importance and value of regular attendance and excellent punctuality
- Ensure pupils are fully aware of the attendance and punctuality procedures operating in school
- Monitor attendance within their form group and intervene with individual pupils whose attendance and punctuality is a cause for concern
- Contact and meet with parents/guardians, should the need arise, to discuss attendance and/or punctuality concerns
- Liaise with HOY/Pupil Support Manager to follow up any unauthorised absence
- Liaise with HOY, SLT and the Pupil Support Manager regarding attendance and punctuality issues

Subject teachers will:

- Take an accurate register towards the beginning of each lesson using SIMS Lesson Monitor and notify relevant staff of any suspicious absences
- Foster positive working relationships with pupils and their parents/guardians
- Apply appropriate sanctions to any pupils arriving late without a legitimate reason
- Refer pupils to their Head of Department if they are persistently late for class
- Support pupils upon their return to school following a long term absence

Administrative staff will:

- Support the Pupil Support Manager in ensuring all morning and afternoon registers have been completed accurately
- Operate first day response to any absence using Truancy Call and contacting parents/guardians
- Assist the Pupil Support Manager/HOYs in ensuring pupils follow correct procedures when arriving after 8.45am and leaving before 3pm
- Report attendance and punctuality concerns/issues to the relevant FT/HOY/Pupil Support Manager
- In the event of a fire drill or other emergency evacuation, assist the SLT in securing the safety of all members of the school community

Parents/guardians should:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly, on time, appropriately dressed and with all necessary equipment
- Instil the value of education and encourage regular attendance and excellent punctuality
- Take a positive interest in their child's learning and reinforce the importance of regular attendance in fulfilling potential
- Support the school's policies and procedures regarding attendance and punctuality
- Inform the school on the first day of absence and before 8.45am if their child is unable to attend and give an indication as to their likely return
- Provide a satisfactory explanation for their child's absence from school

- Arrange medical and other appointments, wherever possible, outside school hours
- Inform the school at the earliest opportunity if their child is experiencing difficulties that could affect their attendance and punctuality
- **Avoid taking their child on holiday during term time**
- Complete a leave of absence (LOA) request form should there be an occasion when their child is absent from school for any reason other than illness
- Notify the school of any changes regarding contact details

Pupils must:

- Attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence – they should aim to achieve 100% attendance
- Arrive on time for morning registration and all lessons, ready to learn with all necessary equipment
- Make a determined effort to catch-up on any work missed due to absence
- Discuss with a member of staff any problems that may affect their attendance and punctuality
- Record their updated (monthly) attendance and punctuality in diaries/planners
- Cooperate fully with staff whenever sanctions are given relating to attendance and punctuality
- Report to Reception if arriving or leaving at any time during the school day (after 8.45am & before 3pm)

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY STRATEGIES

Attendance and punctuality is a high priority in school and is discussed regularly at Senior Leadership level, Senior Pastoral Group, Year Team and Pupil Welfare Committee meetings. All staff have a responsibility to promote the importance and value of regular attendance and excellent punctuality to pupils and their parents/guardians.

The school employs a number of strategies to support pupils and their parents/guardians in striving to achieve 100% attendance and excellent punctuality. These include:

- Delivering 'Attend to Achieve' assemblies to promote and reinforce the value of attending school regularly and on time.
- Delivering regular attendance and punctuality assemblies for all year groups.
- Producing personalised attendance and punctuality reports each half term for every pupil.

- Providing rewards (Appendix 3) for excellent attendance and punctuality and significant improvements in attendance.
- Providing personalised early intervention for pupils and/or parents/guardians
- Producing regular, detailed analyses of attendance and punctuality patterns for whole school, year groups, pupil groups and individual pupils.
- Setting attendance targets for the whole school, year groups, pupil groups and individual pupils where appropriate.
- Closely monitoring pupils with attendance and punctuality issues.
- Arranging alternative provision as part of a personalised curriculum.
- Organising reintegration support packages following lengthy absences, which may involve a phased return and/or part-time timetable.
- Hosting 'coffee mornings' for 'hard to reach' parents/guardians whose child has attendance difficulties.
- Providing guidance for parents/guardians on the school website and in pupil diaries/planners.
- Working in partnership with Wigan Council Start Well Services.
- Liaising with our associated and other primary schools, as part of the KS2/3 transition programme, to put in place early intervention strategies to improve attendance.

In addition to the strategies listed above, as a school we also recognise that providing effective pastoral care and effective teaching and learning have a direct impact on attendance. As such, we continually look to make further improvements in these areas.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Young people are sometimes, for various reasons, reluctant to attend school. At St John Fisher, we recognise that poor attendance can often be a sign that there are more serious issues going on in a child's life. This may be linked to problems at home and/or in school. Parents/guardians should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance in school, for example, bereavement, divorce or separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school to identify any additional support that may be required and allow the school to intervene at the earliest opportunity.

The school also recognises that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to maintain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health

needs and children looked after (CLA). School staff will consider all factors affecting attendance before deciding upon the most appropriate intervention strategies to apply.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ABSENCES

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents/guardians should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence. Parents/guardians should provide an explanation for the absence and, if possible, let school know the date they expect their child to return. Contact should be made with school on each subsequent day of absence. If no contact has been made by parents/guardians, the school will endeavour to make contact by using Truancy Call. Where there are safeguarding or other concerns, it may be appropriate for school staff to conduct a home visit.

The school is under no obligation to accept the reason given for absence when there is doubt as to its validity. For prolonged absence due to illness, parents/guardians may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence, such as a note from a GP, an appointment card or a prescription paper. **Only the school can authorise absence.**

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Absence will not be authorised unless parents/guardians have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday.
- Shopping for uniform.
- Having their hair cut.
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up".
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school.
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school.

Where parents/guardians fail or refuse to engage with support offered by the school and further unauthorised absence occurs, the school will consider the use of legal sanctions.

ILLNESS / APPOINTMENT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Should a pupil become unwell during the school day, they should report to their HOY, the Pupil Support Manager or member of SLT. A decision will be made, consulting staff trained in First Aid where appropriate, whether or not it is appropriate for the child to be allowed to go home. Parents/guardians will always be notified if their child has been given permission to go home.

Pupils should NOT contact parents/guardians directly using their mobile phones if they are feeling unwell.

Pupils will not be allowed to leave school during the day unless approval has been given by HOY, the Pupil Support Manager or member of SLT.

If a pupil has an appointment to attend during the school day, they should bring an appointment card into school or an explanatory note from a parent/guardian; this must be signed by a HOY, Pupil Support Manager or member of SLT before the pupil is allowed to leave school. The pupil should 'sign out' at Reception and sign back in if they return during the school day.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA)

Persistent absence is defined as any child whose cumulative attendance is 90% or below at any point during the academic year. Absence at this level has the potential to significantly hinder the progress made by a pupil and in such cases the school expects the full support and cooperation of parents/guardians in order to tackle this. Pupils are at risk of becoming persistently absent if they have the following amount of time off school within each half term:

- 3 days by the end of the first half term (October)
- 6 days by the end of the second half term (December)
- 9 days by the end of the third half term (February)
- 12 days by the end of the fourth half term (April)
- 15 days by the end of the fifth half term (May)
- 19 days by the end of the sixth half term (July)

PENALTY NOTICES (Appendix 4)

- Parents/guardians have the responsibility to ensure a child's full attendance at school.
- St John Fisher Catholic High School may use Penalty Notices at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting upon advice from SLT and the Pupil Support Manager.
- Penalty Notices can be used for unauthorised absence, unapproved holidays and persistent lateness to school.

PUNCTUALITY PROCEDURES

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil arrives late to school they could miss out on important information for the day. Pupils who arrive late disrupt registration/lessons and this can be embarrassing for the pupil. Pupils who are persistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Pupils who are late twice or more each week will be placed on a one hour Head of Year detention. More serious sanctions will be issued to those pupils who are persistently late to school. The school would expect the full support and cooperation from parents/guardians of those pupils who are persistently late to school.

Registration commences at 8.45am and the school expects all pupils to arrive no later than 8.40am. If a pupil arrives after 8.45am without a justifiable reason, they will be marked as present but arriving late and issued with an 'L' mark. The pupil will also be issued with a 15 minute same-day 'late gate' detention at break time; failure to attend this detention will result in a 30 minute detention being given to be served after school on a Friday.

Pupils who arrive after the close of register (9.40 am) without a justifiable reason, will be marked as late after registration and recorded with a 'U'. This will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session. Absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, if a pupil had a dental or medical appointment. If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME – LEAVE OF ABSENCE

After illness, the taking of holidays during term time is the single largest cause of absence from schools in England. At St John Fisher we believe that holidays in term time are always undesirable because of the impact on our pupils' education and we encourage parents/guardians always to take family holidays during school holidays. Taking holidays in term time has a disruptive effect upon pupils' learning and it is often difficult for them to catch up with work that has been missed. It may also suggest to some pupils that their education is not a high priority.

The Headteacher **WILL NOT** grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence will be granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Parents/guardians wishing to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time must complete a Leave of Absence (LOA) form and return it to school for the attention of the Headteacher. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised (G) and may lead to fixed penalty fines of up to £60 per parent, per child, rising to £120, being issued by the Local Authority.

LESSON MONITOR

Pupils are registered electronically using SIMS Lesson Monitor; this is conducted by form tutors and teaching/non-teaching staff during registration and all lessons.

APPENDIX 1

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents/guardians must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

Contents of Attendance Register

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

APPENDIX 2

Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Present in school during registration.

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness

but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They

are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

APPENDIX 3

Rewards

- Praise postcards for improved attendance and/or punctuality
- Certificates each term for excellent attendance and punctuality
- Certificates each term for significant improvements in attendance and punctuality
- Recognition in celebration assemblies
- Celebration breakfast each term for the form class (per year group) with the best attendance
- Entry into termly prize draw for excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Entry into prize draw for free Prom ticket (Year 11 only)
- Entry into prize draw for free Alton Towers ticket (Years 7 – 10 only)
- Invitation to annual rewards event for excellent / most improved attendance and punctuality

APPENDIX 4

Penalty Notice

When a pupil's attendance record falls to an unacceptable level due to unauthorised absence, the school will arrange a meeting with parents/guardians to devise a plan of action, aimed at providing appropriate support to enable the pupil improve his/her attendance. A failure to cooperate with any such plan without a valid reason will, if the pupil's attendance continues to drop, result in a referral to the Start Well Service. If the pupil's attendance continues to deteriorate, the Local Authority may take legal action against a parent/guardian. This would take the form of a written warning, followed by a Penalty Notice (PN).

Prior to a PN being issued, parents/guardians will receive a written warning explaining the extent of their child's non-attendance and the possibility of receiving a PN if their attendance does not improve in 15 days. During this period, the child must not have any further unauthorised absences from school. There is no limit to the number of times a formal warning of a possible PN issue may be made in any particular case.

An Education Penalty Notice will be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised by the school
- A pupil has accumulated unauthorised absences including any late marks with a coding of 'U' and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.

How it works

- We will write to you to tell you that you may be fined if your child's attendance does not improve in 15 days
- If there is no improvement, you will get a £60 Penalty Notice Fine
- If you don't pay this within 21 days, the fine increases to £120
- If you don't pay the £120 fine within 28 days we can take you to court under the Education Act.

There is no right of appeal against a notice, but you can contact us if you think the notice has been sent to the wrong person, or if you can prove the absence was due to illness.

Defending the charges

If you are taken to court, there are only four reasons that you can defend the charges against you. These are if your child:

- Is ill or couldn't go to school due to an emergency
- Lives over a certain distance and we haven't been able to help get them into a school nearer to you or help with transport

- Misses school due to religious reasons
- Has an authorised absence.

If found you are found guilty

If you are found guilty in court, you may be:

- Fined up to £2500
- Sentenced to three months in prison
- Given a Parenting Order. This involves going to Parent Support sessions for between six and eight weeks.
- Your child may also be taken to the Family Proceedings Court.

Ratified by the Governing Body	
Due for review	