

Whole School Attendance Policy

Lead member of staff	Mrs Jen Harvey
Governor Committee	Full Governing Body
Chair of Governors signature	
Date Signed	
Date of publication	September 2020
Review date	November 2023

ShipleY School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. The school will provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. School attendance is subject to a number of Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education. Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and county attendance targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40am – 8.50am. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes (close at 9.00am). If a pupil arrives between 8.50 am and 9.00 am they will be recorded as being ‘late during the time that the register was open (statistical - meaning present)’. Pupils arriving after 9.00am will be recorded as being ‘late after the register closed (statistical meaning – unauthorised absence)’. A pupil arriving after 9.00am, should be brought to the school office by the adult responsible for bringing them to school and will be marked as ‘unauthorised absent’ unless there is a legitimate reason provided, such as severe weather conditions. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. The afternoon registration will be at: 1.00 pm. The registers will close at: 1.10 pm

First Day Absence

It is the responsibility of the parent/s/carers to inform the school office by telephone, letter or in person (not through sibling word of mouth). In circumstances where no information has been

received, the school secretary will telephone the daytime contact number for the parents or carers on the closure of registration.

Third Day of Absence/Continuing Absence

If the absence continues to be unexplained, a letter will be sent to the home address.

Fifth Day of Absence

If any pupil is absent without an explanation for 5 consecutive days the school will notify the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s/carers. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's EWO.

Return to School

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence Notes

Notes received from parent/s/carers explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. Telephone messages from parents explaining absence are acceptable. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parent/s/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

Supporting vulnerable pupils and families

The School is committed to working closely with the virtual school to support Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children. The school also monitors closely the attendance of any young carers, SEND pupils and GRT families, working with the appropriate agencies if necessary.

Holidays in Term Time

- Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time.
- Following guidance from the DfE The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 The amendments make clear that Headteacher's may not grant absence for holiday during term time under any circumstances. *"The current law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term"*

SHIPLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

time. Any application for leave must be in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave". This revised guidance means our ability to grant term-time absence under, "exceptional circumstances," will be extremely rare.

- Absence not approved by the school in writing and in advance will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Unauthorised absences will stay on the child's record and go with them to their next school. The code H is still in use and schools would be advised to record the exceptional reasons for granting of an absence for holiday reasons.
- The school reserves the right to remove your child from the school roll if they fail to return to school within ten days after the agreed return to school date. This in effect means that your child could lose their place at the school.

Fixed Penalty Notices

- The code G must continue to be used for unauthorised holiday absence. No referral can be made for a Fixed Penalty Notice for holiday absence unless the G code is used.
- There is no mandatory expectation for schools to make a referral for the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised holiday although it is expected that in the light of these amendments, referrals will increase. Governors of Shipley CE Primary have agreed that any unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more over a 10-week period will be referred for a fixed penalty notice by contacting the Education Welfare Service.

Absence for Holiday on Exceptional Grounds – Additional Notes

- Parents do not have the automatic right to take a child from school for holiday purposes during the school term. Permission must be obtained in advance.
- Schools are expected to firmly discourage absences during term time: especially during the period leading up to and including the National Curriculum Tests and Tasks and in the first and last week of each term.
- Schools are legally obliged to record all instances of unauthorised absences on your child's records.

Parents wishing to take their child on holiday during term time must complete the form 'Parental Request to School to Authorise an Absence in Exceptional Circumstances' available from the school office. This should then be returned to the office and a meeting arranged with the Headteacher **before** arrangements are made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually and absence will only be authorized if there are exceptional circumstances and will take the following factors into account:

- Length of the proposed leave
- Age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record
- Proximity of SAT's and other assessments

SHIPLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Pupil's educational needs, whether they are working within or above expected levels
- General welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- Previous term time holidays taken
- When the request was made

Attendance Awards

The EWO works with the school to discuss issues such as lateness and attendance. In conjunction with this, the school awards certificates to those children who have achieved 95 % and above with a separate certificate for 100% attendance at the end of each term and at the end of the academic year.

Attendance Targets

These targets are monitored and reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis by the Headteacher.

Covid-19

Attendance expectations

From the start of the autumn term 2020, pupil attendance will be mandatory and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

A staggered start and end to the day has been introduced for the Autumn term to minimize congestion at the school gate. The school will be flexible around arrival times.

New for 2020 to 2021 – not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although school attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To make sure schools record this accurately and consistently, there are changes to the regulations governing school attendance registers to add a new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

SHIPLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENTAL REQUEST TO SCHOOL TO AUTHORISE AN ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Pupils are only in school for 190 days each year. There are 175 other days for holidays and other activities. 80% attendance represents 1 day off a week. 90% attendance represents 1 day off per fortnight. Below 90% is defined as a persistent absentee.

Child's Name		Date of Birth	
Class/Form		Year Group	
Name of person making request & relationship to child			
Address		Phone number	
Dates your child will be absent from school			

Absences will only be authorised if this request is made in advance of the dates your child will be absent from school AND if the circumstances of the absence are exceptional. There is no entitlement to take a child out of school for a family holiday.

The law states that parents must ensure their children regularly attend school to receive their education. The head teacher can only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional is likely to be rare, significant, unavoidable and short.

Whether the absence is exceptional is at the head teacher's discretion based on their assessment of the situation and can vary from school to school. A weeks' absence for holiday and a weeks' absence for illness would give an attendance figure below 95%. The government considers attendance unacceptable below 95%.

The head teacher will consider the reasons for your absence request. You may be asked to provide evidence to support your request. Please note that having already booked a holiday will not be considered as a good reason for term time absence. In relation to 'unavoidable' absence, the head teacher will consider whether the event could have reasonably been scheduled at another time. Issues of cost will not be considered as an exceptional reason.

If you wish for this absence to be authorised, you will need to fully explain (together with evidence) why the circumstances of this absence are exceptional.

Why is this absence exceptional?

(continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

SHIPLEY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Declaration

I confirm that the information I have given on this form is true. I understand that if I do not fully complete this form, fully respond to requests for further information or that ultimately the absence is not authorised, my child’s attendance will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I understand that I must ensure my child attends school regularly and that failing to do so is a criminal offence, which may result in legal proceedings being taken against me, either through a Penalty Notice or by prosecution in the Magistrates’ Court.

Signed:..... Date:
(Parent/Carer)

Full Name:.....

Unless further information is required, a decision will be sent to you within 5 school days.

School Office to complete this section			
Last Academic Year Attendance	%	Green Amber Red	Green – more than 95% Satisfactory Amber – 85% to 95% Needs improvement Red – less than 85% Unsatisfactory
Current Attendance	%	Green, Amber, Red	
Holidays taken so far this academic year		days	

Head Teacher to complete this section	
Pupil is working <i>below, within or above</i> expected levels:	
Your request is approved and the absence as set out above is authorized.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your request is not approved. If the pupil is absent as proposed above, it will be recorded as unauthorized for the following reason: Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please see the attached letter sent in to parents/carers for further information and contact me if you wish to discuss this further. Please note that in line with our school policy and WSCC Guidelines any unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more in a 10 week period will be referred for a fixed penalty fine.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signed: Dated.....	