



# **Attendance Policy**

## **2024-2025**

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### **Attendance Team**

The attendance team at Arthur Terry school consists of the following people:

**Mrs Bissett – Assistant Headteacher i/c of Attendance**

**Mrs Sheppard –Attendance Officer**

**Mrs Hodgetts – Attendance Assistant**

**Mrs Storrar – Attendance Assistant**

## Attendance Matters – Our Target

# 96%

As a school we ask that all students including those categorised as Disadvantaged and SEND (referred to as Vulnerable throughout this document) achieve at least 96% attendance. We recognise that for some this may be a challenging target; therefore we will provide additional support to students and their families to encourage excellent attendance.

In keeping with our vulnerable first ethos our aim is to ensure that we reduce any gap between vulnerable and non-vulnerable attendance figures.

## Attendance Matters – The Main Principles

- There is a direct link between attendance and attainment at school. The Arthur Terry School is therefore committed to working with parents and carers to ensure all students achieve as high a level of attendance as possible. Students are set a target of achieving at least 96% attendance.
- **Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school regularly. Students should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence and legal action may be taken by the Local Authority.**
- Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 5 days or more where they have been unable to contact the parent/carer/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Local Support Team.
- Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether a student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised. The decision lies with school as to whether or not an absence will be authorised. For this reason, information about the cause of each absence is always required.

## The effect on Attendance

Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which means his number of lessons missed
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

## **Absence**

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006.

***Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.***

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue), family holidays are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members.

Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

### **Request for leaving during Term Time, including family holidays**

Parents/Carers are able to request permission to take their children out of school during term time where there are exceptional circumstances, an application form should be requested from the Attendance Team via email ([attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk)) at least **two weeks** before they are due to leave.

Request for leave during term time can only be authorised by the Headteacher and the outcome of the request will be communicated to Parents/Carers.

**Where a request has been denied or a request has not been submitted but the absence still occurs, the school may take legal action in the form of a Penalty Notice. Please note the leave in term time can not be requested or authorised retrospectively**

## **Reporting Absence Due to Illness or Medical Appointments**

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that the school is made aware.

### **Reporting Same Day Illness**

If a student is going to be absent from school due to illness, then a parent or carer must inform the school via the Studybugs App or via the Studybugs widgets on the school website. If a parent or carer doesn't notify the school in a timely manner, the absence will be classed as unauthorised. Please note that unauthorised absences from school, may lead to legal action being taken against you. The parent/carer will need to explain fully the reason for their child's illness. We are unable to accept single word responses such as unwell or ill.

**Parents/Carers will need to report their child's absence by 8:30am each day their child is absent. Failure to report a child's illness before 8:30am may result in a truancy message being sent home, phone calls from the attendance team and an unauthorised absence mark.**

**If a parent/carer does receive a truancy message they must reply swiftly to support the safeguarding procedures the school is required to follow.**

Notifying the school of your child's absence does not automatically mean it will be authorised. The school determines whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised based on specific circumstances, this means that attendance marks can change if deemed appropriate. The Headteacher may require further evidence to authorise an absence and if this is the case the attendance team will be in contact. Medical evidence will be required in cases of illness which are 5 continuous days or longer.

Additionally, please be aware that unannounced home visits may also be conducted if necessary.

### **Medical Appointments**

Where possible, parents are required to arrange appointments outside of school hours, e.g. dentist, doctor.

If this is not possible, parents should notify the Attendance Team **prior** to the appointment by emailing [attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk).

When emailing the attendance team please include any appropriate evidence to support the absence such as:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- An appointment letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
- Print screen of a text message appointment

**If evidence is not provided, then the absence may be marked as unauthorised until evidence is provided.**

Please note that pupils should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

### **Collecting students from School for Illness or Medical Appointments**

If your child needs to leave school due to illness or has a medical appointment they will need to be collected by a Parent/Carer which is registered on our system. We are unable to release students without the presence of a Parent/Carer. Children are not permitted to leave school site on their own during school hours. Parents/Carers are required to meet their child in reception and sign them out of school.



### **Children Missing from Education (CME)**

As a school, we are concerned about any child or young person who may be missing education because in addition to their educational development their safety and wellbeing may be at risk.

The Birmingham City Council Children Missing from Education (CME) team works jointly with schools in respect of pupils on roll at school, who are absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown'. This might be:

- A child who is not at their last known address and:
- has 5 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or:
- has left school suddenly and their destination is unknown. This policy does not cover those children not receiving education due to a family not taking up an offer of a school place from the School Admissions Service.

### **Home Education – Parents/Carers Role**

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving efficient full-time education. Some parents may elect to home educate their children and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so (unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order). Where a parent notifies the school in writing of their intention to home educate, the school must inform the local authority using the Birmingham City Council EHE referral form, before deleting the child from its admission register.

## **Registration and Punctuality (KS3 – KS4)**

For safeguarding purposes, a register is taken at the start of the school day and each lesson. Each student will receive two registration marks throughout the day, an AM and PM registration. These two registration marks contribute to a student's overall attendance percentage.

### **Morning Registration (AM)**

- All students are expected on site by 8:45am each morning. A movement bell will ring at 8:45am, students have 5 minutes to ensure they are in registration.
- The morning register will be taken at 8:50am after the second bell. Any students who arrive after this time will be coded as **L** and will be issued with a same day 30-minute detention.
- Students who arrive after 9:10am will need to enter school through reception and speak directly to the Attendance Officer. The student will be marked as **U** (Late) and this absence will be marked as unauthorised.
- If the student's lateness is due to exceptional travel circumstances this detention *may* be cancelled. This will need to be in liaison with the Progress Leaders and Parents.
- There may be occasions where in liaison with the Attendance Team and Progress Leaders special consideration for lateness will be granted for a short time and a student will not be sanctioned. Special considerations for lateness will need to be discussed prior to a student's lateness. Parents should email [attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk) to discuss this.

### **Lesson Registration**

- All staff will complete a lesson register throughout the day, if a student is late to their lesson teachers will use their discretion and may issue a same-day 30-minute detention.
- For safeguarding purposes, a lesson register informs the member of staff who they are expecting in their lesson.
- If a student has not arrived to their lesson but has been present throughout the day the member of staff should ask for an On Call Attendance Referral.
- **It is a student's responsibility to ensure they have informed their teacher at the start of the lesson if they are going to not be in their lesson but are in school.**

### **Afternoon Registration (PM)**

- Students will receive their afternoon registration mark during their Period 4 lesson. Students have a warning bell at 1:00pm and are expected to be in their lessons by 1:05pm. Teachers will use their discretion and may issue a same-day 30-minute detention for any student who arrives after 1:05pm.

## Tracking your child's attendance

Your child's attendance can be viewed on Go4Schools in the "Attendance" section:

### Attendance



If you believe the attendance figure for your child is **incorrect**, please email [attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk).

### Sixth Form Attendance and Punctuality

- All Sixth Form students should be available on school site from 8:45am to 3:35pm. The school day finishes at 3:05pm, however on the occasion that a Sixth Form student receives a detention they will be required to stay at school until 3:35pm.
- On joining the Sixth Form, students sign up to a Sixth Form Code of Conduct. As part of this, and to ensure that students make good progress in their studies, excellent attendance is essential. The attendance target for the Sixth Form, in line with the rest of the school, is 96%.
- As part of the Sixth Form Policy students are expected:
  - To attend all timetabled lessons
  - To attend all registration sessions, tutor periods and assemblies
  - To report to any lessons where a staff member is absent unless they have been told otherwise
  - To arrive punctually for registration and lessons
  - Not to arrange routine medical appointments during lesson time
  - Not to take driving lessons in school time
  - Not to miss school for any reason related to part time work
  - To follow the procedures laid out in the school Attendance Policy regarding lateness, absence, illness, and leave of absence. Failure to do so may result in absences being recorded as unauthorised
- We recognise that some of our Sixth Form students travel longer distances to get to school. As per the main school policy, students will be issued with a 30-minute same day detention for lateness. If the student's lateness is due to exceptional travel circumstances this detention *may* be cancelled. Students should discuss this with their Tutor and Director of Sixth Form. Tutors may contact home to discuss travel arrangements to support punctuality.

- There may be occasions where in liaison with the Sixth Form team special consideration for lateness will be granted for a short time and a student will not be sanctioned (for example if a student moves out of the local area). Special Considerations for lateness will need to be discussed prior to a student's lateness. Parents should email [attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk) to discuss this.
- Students in Year 13 are expected to continue to attend lessons up until study leave for exams commences. Failure to do so may result in students being withdrawn from exam entries.

## **Monitoring Attendance (KS3 and KS4) – Target for all students is 96% or above**

Student's attendance will be regularly reviewed, and the following actions could happen to support student's attendance.

**In keeping with our vulnerable first ethos students who are categorised as vulnerable and have attendance concerns will be targeted first at all stages.**

At all stages we want to work with Parents/Carers to support their child's attendance. The below actions work as a **guide** only and different support methods may be more suitable for some students.

### **Stage 1 Attendance Concern (Below 96%)**

School will intervene and offer support utilising some/all of the following:

Communication with student and parents/carers about attendance concerns, this could be in the form of a letter, phone conversation or meeting in person.

Tutor/Student Support Services/Progress Leader may complete a three houses activity as part of the Early Help Process.

### **Stage 2 Formalised Support**

*Stage 2 Early Absence Support may be initiated if a student has 1 or more unauthorised absence.*

An Early Help Meeting will be arranged with the students' Progress Leader. An Early Help Assessment may be required for some support to be accessed along with a Team Around the Family meeting

Home visit arranged, if appropriate. (N.B unannounced home visits can be conducted at any time when deemed necessary)

### **Stage 3 Warnings/Concerns Remain**

*Initiated after Stage 2 a Formal Attendance Meeting will be arranged with the Attendance Officer. An Attendance Contract will be drawn up to formalise support. Achievable & individual targets will be set & reviewed regularly. The contract is put in place to improve attendance & prevent further escalation.*

### **Stage 4 Legal Action – No Improvement**

*Legal action (Penalty Notice or Prosecution) MAY be requested from the Local Authority (LA) if Unauthorised Term Time Absence is taken, or if overall absence continues to occur & reaches or exceeds the National Threshold for absence, despite stages 1-3 being attempted. Statutory Guidance States a Referral to Children's Social Care for children with 'Severe Absence' (less than 50%) should be considered to obtain 'Intense Support'.*

# Attendance Roadmap



In line with the DfE Statutory Guidance (in force from 19th August 2024) we offer a supportive, stepped, attendance approach. We will offer a welcoming ethos with high expectations for all. We will assess data to identify absence trends & use preventative discussions/meetings with families to listen, understand & support to remove barriers. Where needed, we will formalise support to nurture improvement with Attendance Contracts & as a last resort we will consider intensifying support &/or enforce legal sanctions.

Did you know, good attendance increases academic success?

Did you know, arriving after the register has closed (30 mins from school starting) = an absence?

Did you know, 90% attendance = approx. 95 missed lessons/hours of learning?

Did you know, 90% attendance = 4 weeks of absence over a year?



## STEP 1 - Identify, Assess & Prevent

Our daily actions & processes aim to promote relationship building with children & families to prevent absence. This involves monitoring data trends & absence patterns to inform conversations with students & parents. The trigger for conversations is where absence is at risk of reaching the new National Threshold (10 sessions (10 half days/5 days) within a 10 week rolling period). Other daily actions involve promoting attendance positively, using praise & incentives, and offering support.

## STEP 2 - Early Absence Support

We move to this step if the National Threshold for absence is met (authorised or unauthorised) to prevent further absence occurring. Progress Leaders will review previous actions. An Early Help meetings will be offered to families to identify if early support or reasonable adjustments are needed. This will be done using discussions &/or meetings to create a supportive action plan. An Early Help Assessment (EHA) may be required for some support to be accessed along with a Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting.

## STEP 3 - Formalised Support

Where absence continues & initial support needs to be increased an Formal Attendance Meeting (FAM) will be offered and an Attendance Contract (AC) drawn up to formalise support. The contract is put in place to improve attendance & prevent further escalation. Achievable & individual targets will be set & reviewed regularly. Medical &/or other information will be actively sought at this point if required by working collaboratively with you & other agencies. An Attendance Contract can run alongside other meetings e.g., TAF meeting.

## STEP 4 - Legal Action - No Improvement

Legal action (Penalty Notice or Prosecution) may be requested from the Local Authority if Unauthorised Term Time Absence is taken, or if overall absence continues to occur & reaches or exceeds the National Threshold for absence, despite STEPS 1-3 being attempted. Statutory Guidance states a referral to children's social care for children with 'Severe Absence' (less than 50%) should be considered to obtain 'Intense Support'.

## PENALTY NOTICES & LEGAL ACTION

**1st Offence** (after 19th August 2024) of Term Time Leave &/or Irregular Attendance (10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence or more) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. If paid within 21 days fine is reduced to £80 per parent, per child.  
**2nd Offence** within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days, no reduction available.  
**3rd Offence** within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) NO PENALTY NOTICE considered. The case will be presented to **Magistrates' Court** under s444(1) or (1a) of the Education Act. If found guilty, a fine of up to £2500 per parent, per child can be issued. Convictions for s444(1a) offences will show on DBS record.

Please talk to us about how we can support you &/or your child at any time.

## Local Authority Referral

If a student has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in total and all previous actions have been followed, the school will seek advice from the Local Authority regarding improving attendance. This will only be used after each stage above has been actioned. If a student is persistently absent due to 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance' please refer to Page 16.



## 'Support First' - school attendance

### Legal Action Information for Parents

This leaflet is for only parents/carers whose child/ren's attendance has not improved following offers of support from their child's school, including a formal meeting. **To avoid Legal Action being taken against you for failing to ensure your child/ren attend school regularly, you are advised of the following:**

- Ensure your child attends school every day it is open, on time, escorting them into school if necessary and handing them over to a member of staff. **(Please be aware your child may get an unauthorised absence mark when they arrive after registration closes).**
- Contact school on the first day of every absence by 9.30am stating the reason for absence and the likely return date.
- Take your child to the doctor if unwell and provide the school with: medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a professional, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence. **(The Head Teacher will not authorise medical absence without evidence).**

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons

## Legal outcomes in respect of poor attendance

### Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

Penalty notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school for first offences. For second offences the discount of £80 will not apply. (In cases of excessive absence, or for a third or more offence, whether for ongoing absence or leave in term time, the matter may be referred straight to Court.)

- **The amount of the penalty is £80.**
- **If this is not paid within 21 days the amount rises to £160.**
- **If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority may prosecute** under section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

### Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

"If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence."

**The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a victim surcharge, and/or make a Parenting Order.**

### Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996:

"If in the above circumstances you, the parent, know that your child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fail without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend, you are guilty of an offence."  
**The court can fine you up to £2,500 per child and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months, impose a victim surcharge and order payment of the prosecution costs.**

**Please note that** Penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child. 'Parent' also includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for the child (and applies whether or not that person lives with the child) or who has care of him/her.

### **Monitoring Attendance (KS5) – Target for all students is 96% or above**

Student's attendance will be regularly reviewed, and the following actions could happen to support student's attendance.

**In keeping with our vulnerable first ethos students who are categorised as vulnerable and have attendance concerns will be targeted first at all stages.**

At all stages we want to work with Parents/Carers to support their child's attendance. The below actions work as a **guide** only and different support methods may be more suitable for some students.

## **Stage 1 Attendance Concern (Below 96%)**

School will intervene and offer support using the following:

Tutor conversation with the student about potential attendance concerns.

Initial phone call home to express concern.

Liaison with parents, offer support and put appropriate targets in place.

## **Stage 2 Attendance Concern**

School Attendance Review Meeting arranged with Director of Sixth Form.

## **Stage 3 Attendance Concern**

Student is classified as a Persistent Absentee. Formal Attendance meeting organised with Director of Sixth Form and Assistant Headteacher in charge of Attendance.

Letter of concern sent home explaining consequences regarding exam entry



### **Emotionally Based School Avoidance**

Where parents are engaging proactively with school to improve a student's attendance, but the student is reluctant to attend due to emotional barriers such as anxiety and worry, challenging thoughts, emotions and self-care, then a campaign led by Forward Thinking Birmingham called #youvebeenmissed may be appropriate.

There are resources available for Parents and Carers to support their Son/Daughter's attendance due to Emotionally Based needs: <https://bwc.nhs.uk/parents-and-carers>

The school will only consider moving to past Stage 1 if a Parent/Carer fails to engage appropriately with efforts to improve their child's attendance.

## Attendance Codes and Certificates

Parents/Carers will receive their child's Attendance Certificate throughout the academic year and can request it any time. On the certificate, Parents/Carers will see the codes used by the school to track attendance. If you believe any codes are incorrect you must email attendance via [attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@arthurterry.bham.sch.uk).

CODE	DESCRIPTION	STATISTICAL MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration e.g., 6 <sup>th</sup> Form attending lessons at other schools)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other exceptional circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration (i.e., student attending other establishment e.g., pupil referral unit, hospital school)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Family holiday (exceptional circumstances agreed in advance)	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised Absence
J	Interview (with prospective employer / other educational establishment)	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/dental appointments	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance (for days set apart by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong)	Authorised Absence
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence
T	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence or Covid-19 related	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances