



Gaddesden Row JMI

Attendance (Pupils) Policy

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body every 2 years.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in September, 2024

It is due for review on *September, 2025* (up to 12 months from the above date).

The name and contact details of the SLT Attendance Lead responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is David Merriman. Email:

head@gaddesdenrow.herts.sch.uk

Signature:
Head Teacher

Date:

Signature:
Chair of Governors

Date:

Produced in line with Hertfordshire Local Authority Guidance.

Overview for Parents

At Gaddesden Row School, we aim for the whole school community – governors, staff, parents, and pupils to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality.

We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school and therefore not reach their full potential.

Gaddesden Row School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Attendance and school achievement have a strong correlation.

From the term after your child turns five, the school is required by law to record, and report authorised and unauthorised absence to the Department for Education.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

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

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "[Working together to improve school attendance](#)" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions.

Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance. This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

Regular and punctual attendance is very important from an early age:

- As well as educating children, schools provide opportunities for making friends and learning vital social skills;
- Children are also encouraged to develop any talents or skills they have, as well as the essential skills of reading, writing and number;
- Children who are regularly absent miss out on certain aspects of their basic education making it difficult to cope in primary school and to transfer successfully to secondary school;
- Children who do not attend school regularly miss out on opportunities, which has a considerable impact on their progress across the curriculum;
- Bad habits can develop at an early age – children with odd absences during Reception and in primary school are at a much higher risk of having poor attendance at secondary school.

If parents are positive and eager about school, children are likely to pick this up.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils, and all members of school staff. To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and, except for schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Add any additional ways in which you promote and incentivise school attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA) A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence.

Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this. All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are a persistent absentee. A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as 'severely absent'.

Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and it is the headteacher/principal, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.

Reasons to attend school regularly – facts to consider

95% attendance	Sounds good, but still means that your child is missing out on one day every month.
90% attendance	Your child is missing ½ a day of school every week.
	Your child is missing 4 whole weeks of school during the academic year.
	Every year, from Reception to Year 6, your child will have missed over ½ a year in total

80% attendance	Your child is missing 1 day every week.
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Achievement

Attendance over 93%	Pupils are more likely to achieve expected progress at primary school as well as improved SATs results. Students achieve an average of 75% A*-C GCSE grades.
Attendance below 90%	Students achieve an average of 25% A*-C GCSE grades at secondary school and SATs results are lower at primary school.

At Gaddesden Row School, our aim to keep whole-school attendance above 96%.

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing!



With the introduction of the new Department of Education (DfE) National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued **after 19th August 2024**.

1 Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

Parent refers to anyone with parental responsibility and may include carers, step-parents, grandparents or any other adult with parental responsibility.

2 National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice **must** be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave of absence or unauthorised absence the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days
- Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child within 28 days

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court.

- Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines up to £2.500
- Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupils-attendance-guidance-for-schools>

School Attendance and the Law

New legislation was passed, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 which introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parent/Carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parent/Carers may be recognised differently under education law, then under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent/carer may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

Authorising Absence from School

It is the Headteacher's decision to authorise an absence. Legitimate reasons for absence include: sickness, days of religious observance, exceptional circumstances and medical appointments that cannot be made out of school time. Reasons that would not be authorised include: shopping, birthdays, getting up late, having a late night, looking after a relative, having a haircut or taking a day trip.

What is the law concerning exceptional absences?

There has been a lot in the press recently about families being fined for taking their children on holiday in term time. Children in Reception reach statutory school age the term after they turn 5. The current law for children of statutory school age (with reference to recent published Government advice*) is explained below, including the circumstances in which the Headteacher may authorise absence and what happens at Gaddesden Row JMI School if an absence is unauthorised. All schools publish their attendance policy on the school's website for reference.

The law states that an 'authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

What happens if your request for authorised absence is refused, and you still take your child out of school? Or you take them out without making a request?

By law, if you do this, the absence cannot be authorised. The regulations do not allow the Headteacher to give retrospective approval. However, if your child is absent from school *for any reason*, please contact us to let us know and please give us the real reason for the absence. It is far better for us to know that your child is well and safe than to be concerned for their safety if you report them ill when they are on holiday or do not contact us at all. In any case, children tend to tell us if they or their friends are going on holiday. The law does allow the school to request medical evidence to support illness, if there is a concern that the child was not really ill. Such absences can be recorded as unauthorised and parents are informed.

The law states that the school should follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure the safety of our children and identify whether the absence is approved or not.

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised or unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can HCC SAPT Statutory Attendance – Support First Model Attendance Policy September 2024 be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained.
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an absence for the session.
- shopping trips.
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- their own or family birthdays.
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- day trips.
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Absence Procedures

We monitor and review all pupils' absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

If a child is absent from school the parent must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 9.20 am, when our register closes;
- The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or you may call into school personally and speak to the office staff. Please be aware that, if you leave a voicemail to report your child's absence, you may receive a call from the school so that we may discuss the absence before deciding as to whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 9.20 am;
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested (where school

have reasonable doubt as to the authenticity of the absences) where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it is your responsibility to contact us.
- If we are unable to contact parents by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding.
- The Local Authority will be informed if no contact has been made with parent/carers by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate) as The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 Section 13 requires schools to inform the local authority of any pupils absent from school and where absences amount to more than 10 or more days, either consecutively or irregularly and have been unauthorised. This means school will have unauthorised 20 am/pm sessions of absences. Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to investigate any unexplained/unauthorised absences. At this point your child will be considered to be “absent from education”.

If absence continues, we will:

- Write to you if your child’s attendance is below 95%.
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Headteacher, David Merriman.
- Consider and offer reasonable adjustments.
- Offer a Families First Assessment to ensure appropriate support is considered.
- Create a personalised robust support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person’s role in improving the attendance patterns of your child.
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from the Local Authority Statutory Attendance Support Team and consider appropriate legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at Gaddesden Row School are 08.45-15.15

Gates open: 8.30am and close at 8.45am.

Registration starts: 8.45am Registration closes: 8.55am

Any parents or carers arriving after 08.50 must sign their child in at the school office.

End of the school day: 3.15pm

What happens if parents are having difficulty ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time?

If the school notices that your child is developing a pattern of absence or lateness, the Headteacher will contact parents about it so that a solution can be resolved. This might involve working with the School Family Worker, who can suggest a range of services to help. The school reviews the attendance of pupils regularly with our Attendance Officer, so if a problem persists, the Headteacher will ask for his/her involvement. Gaddesden Row JMI School's attendance policy does include the ability for the school to issue penalty notices if parents fail to ensure that children regularly attend school. A repeated pattern of unauthorised absence with no attempt by parents to improve the situation is likely to culminate in the issue of a penalty notice.

Expectations

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents, and pupils. All these groups need to understand the expectations which the policy makes of them.

Expectations of Gaddesden Row School

Schools are responsible for supporting the attendance of their pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance.

Schools are required to call attendance registers at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and to record whether pupils are present, absent or on an approved educational activity.

For pupils of compulsory school age, schools are required to differentiate in the registers between absence that is authorised and absence that is unauthorised.

Gaddesden Row seeks to:

- work actively to maximise attendance rates - both in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole - as one of their key tasks
- have clear policies in place to address persistent absence
- support parents in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance
- be sensitive to the needs of individual parents and this should be reflected in the way in which attendance issues are addressed. Schools should recognise that some parents have difficulty understanding written communications. They should also recognise the reluctance of some parents to come into school.
- produce school attendance policies which are consistently applied and clearly communicated to all parents, pupils and staff
- provide a safe learning environment.
- ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis.
- follow up all instances of poor attendance and punctuality.
- Have a robust system to monitor pupils' attendance who are vulnerable and/or young carers, subject to a child protection plan, English as a second language, those with SEND and children eligible for free school meals.

Expectations of Parents

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs that they may have. Most parents fulfil this responsibility by registering their children at a school.

Parents whose children are registered at a school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school.

The expectations for parents of pupils at the school are to:

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn
- instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- ensure that they are aware of the attendance policy of their children's school
- impress upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct
- take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and other relevant meetings
- work in partnership with their children's school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- notify their child's school if he/she is absent. This should be done as soon as possible - preferably on the first day of absence. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. This explanation should be confirmed - preferably in writing - when the child returns to school
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours
- avoid booking holidays during term time

Expectations of Pupils

The expectations for pupils at the school are to:

- attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually.
- remember to hand any note giving reasons for absence to the relevant person.
- be ready to learn.

Registration

- Registers are called at 8.50am and 1.00pm. Registers close at 8.55 am and 1.15pm. Registers are marked consistently by staff.
- Any pupil arriving after closure of the register will be marked absent for the whole of the session.
- Registers are marked in accordance with DfE guidance.

Lateness

- Any pupil arriving after 8.50am should report to the school office.
- Parents should enter the date, time of arrival and the reason for lateness in the Late Book, held outside the school office.
- When authorising late arrivals, the Headteacher will take circumstances into consideration.
- The Secretary is responsible for transferring late information to the registers.
- In the event that the building is evacuated, the Late Book and signing in/out books are taken to the assembly point by the designated person with the registers to determine who was in the building at the point of evacuation.

Following up Lateness

Parents whose children are regularly late for school will be contacted by the Headteacher who will work with the family to bring about an improvement in punctuality.

Absences

- A phone call is required from an adult who has care of the child by 9.30am each day of the absence, unless a longer period is approved by the Headteacher.

- A reason must be provided for all absences from school, in writing, when the pupil returns to school. This may be by email to admin@gaddesdenrow.herts.sch.uk.
- Correspondence concerning absence is kept in individual pupil files.
- Absences are authorised by the Headteacher.
- School may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided.

Leaving and returning to School during School Day

- When pupils leave or return to school during the school day, the Secretary or Headteacher must be notified.
- Parents must complete the signing in/out book held outside the school office, giving the date, time in/out and reason for having to leave during the school day.

Following up Absence

- Gaddesden Row School follows up all unexplained absences from school by contacting parents/carers.
- The school will work with pupils and families to ensure reintegration of pupils after long absences.
- Pupils' attendance data is included in end of year reports, including unauthorised absences and lateness.

First Day Response

- Gaddesden Row School uses First Day Response. If a child is absent and no contact has been made by parents/carers by 9.30am, a member of school staff will call home to ascertain the reason for absence.
- The Secretary uses the information gained from First Day Response to update the registers, in consultation with the Headteacher when necessary.
- By 09.30, if no contact has been received, a home visit may be carried to ascertain where the child is.

Rewards

- Gaddesden Row School rewards good attendance through its normal reward systems.
- The school gives individual certificates termly to pupils achieving 100 per cent attendance.
- Bronze, silver and gold badges are awarded for every 10 full weeks children are in school.
- £5 every week for each class with 97% attendance and £10 for 100% attendance.
- The LA issues 100 per cent attendance certificates annually.

Publication of Information

- Parents, pupils, staff and governors are informed of whole school attendance issues and statistics on a regular basis in the school newsletter (which is published on the website), and in the Headteacher's Report to Governors.
- Gaddesden Row School shares information on individual pupils' attendance as necessary with parents, pupils and staff.
- New parents are given information on the school's attendance policy in the school information pack.
- The policy is published on the school website and may also be viewed in school on request at the school office.
- This policy, and its review, is shared with all school staff and approved by the Governing Body.

Penalty Notices

At Gaddesden Row School we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. Regular and punctual attendance is a legal requirement for pupils registered at Gaddesden Row. If a pupil has 10 sessions (half days) unauthorised absences in the current and/or previous term, a penalty notice may be applied for as a suitable intervention in circumstances of parentally condoned truancy, where the parent is judged capable of securing their child's regular attendance.

Attendance Improvement Officer

Gaddesden Row JMI School works closely with the Attendance Improvement Officer. Through this partnership, all absences and late arrivals in school are monitored and the AIO works with the school and with families to ensure full attendance.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/803956/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

Further Guidance and Information

Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

Gaddesden Row JMI School is allocated an Attendance Improvement Officer who will work in close partnership with the school. In working closely with schools the Attendance Improvement Officer will offer the following services:-

Consultations

Consultations by the AIO will be allocated according to need, usually termly. Need will be identified using the school annual DfE Absence data. The purpose of the consultation will be to:-

- identify pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties. This will include the regular examination of attendance registers
- agree on focused, time-limited action which needs to be taken by the school and/or the AIO. Before accepting a referral the AIO will expect school staff to have first undertaken some preliminary work themselves, eg action by the class teacher or Headteacher, contact with parents, etc
- feedback and exchange information in relation to work which has been undertaken by the AIO and/or the school
- identify areas of concern and of good practice in relation to attendance matters
- advise the school on strategies for improving attendance
- assist schools in identifying PA pupils and those at risk of becoming PA and ensuring that effective plans of action are in place

Casework

- AIOs may undertake early intervention (pre-referral) work prior to a case being accepted. This may include the following:
 - telephoning or writing to the parents about their child's absences or lateness
 - attending a meeting with parents arranged by the school to emphasise the need for good attendance and the possibility that, if there is no improvement, the AIO will become formally involved.
- Once a case has been accepted, the AIO will undertake direct work with pupils and their parents. This can include:
 - arranging meetings between the school, parents and pupils
 - making home visits to assess the situation and determine what action needs to be taken
 - offering specific support to parents and individual pupils, either at school or elsewhere
 - facilitating meetings
 - enabling the pupil and parents to access appropriate support from other services and agencies through the use of Integrated Practice/Common Assessment process
- The AIO may also arrange for the pupil to receive specialist support such as counselling or group work.

Attendance Improvement Officers will usually work with children whose absences have not been authorised. However, AIOs may work with children whose absences have been authorised.

In-service training for school staff

Attendance Improvement Officers will offer, or assist with, INSET sessions on a range of subjects related to the attendance or welfare of pupils, including:-

- the promotion of regular school attendance
- working effectively with the AIO
- addressing persistent absence
- legal responsibilities relating to school attendance

The Use of Legal Action

If a parent fails to register a child of compulsory school age at a school (and he/she does not intend to educate the child otherwise than at school). The LA will serve a School Attendance Order under Sections 437 - 439 of the Education Act 1996.

If a pupil, who is registered at a school, fails to attend that school regularly without a legitimate reason and attempts by the Attendance Improvement Officer and the school fail to secure that pupil's return to regular attendance, the County Council will take legal action. A complaint may be laid against the parents in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, or an Education Supervision Order relating to the pupil under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989 will be applied for. Any exceptional mitigating circumstances relating to the pupil's absence will be taken into account, when considering legal action. 'Exceptional mitigating circumstances' will be determined by the Central Attendance and Employment Support Team Manager on behalf of the County Lead for Behaviour and Attendance. If 'exceptional mitigating circumstances' are not deemed to exist then cases which remain open for more than 24 weeks will be referred for legal action. Legal action will, however, be taken earlier when appropriate.

If, after legal action has been taken, the child still fails to attend school regularly the AIO will keep the case open and will, if appropriate, take further legal action at a subsequent date.

In cases where parents wilfully withhold a pupil from school, or persistently refuse to co-operate with efforts aimed at affecting a return to satisfactory school attendance, the ISL Attendance Team will promptly begin legal proceedings on the grounds that no other course of action is available.

The Central Attendance & Employment Support Team Manager on behalf of the County Lead for Behaviour and Attendance will give approval before legal proceedings are commenced.

The Attendance Team will consider applying for an Education Supervision Order when a parent finds it difficult to exercise an effective influence over a child who has developed a pattern of poor attendance

Before an application is made for an Education Supervision Order:

- other possible means of dealing with the pupil's poor attendance will be explored
- the attitudes of the parent and pupil towards the poor attendance, and their wishes as to how it should be dealt with, will be noted
- the AIO will be of the view that the Order will have a significant effect on the pupil's attendance at school

Deletion from Roll

A pupil's name may not be deleted from the attendance register unless it has also been deleted from the admissions register. Full details are contained in regulation 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) When a pupil's name is removed from the admissions register, the school must notify their local Attendance Team.

A pupil of compulsory school age should have his/her name deleted from the admissions register when:

- the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a School Attendance Order and another school is substituted by the LA for that named in the Order or the Order is revoked
- the pupil has been registered at another school. (Schools can register Traveller children even if they are on the roll of another school. The school the child normally attends is the base school; the other registration is temporary)
- the school has received written notification from the parent that they are educating the pupil themselves. (Elective Home Education)

- the pupil has ceased to attend the school and no longer lives within a reasonable distance of the school
- in the case of a pupil granted leave of absence, the pupil has failed to attend the school within the 10 school days immediately following the last day of absence which was granted and the school is not satisfied that the pupil is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause and both the school and the local authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry to locate him/her
- the pupil is certified by the School Medical Officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- the pupil has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days, the absence is unauthorised, *and* there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause *and* both the school and the AIO have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate him/her
- the pupil is serving a custodial sentence of four months or longer and the head teacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will return at the end of that period
- the pupil has died
- the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets *and* the relevant person has indicated that the pupil will cease to attend the school *or* the pupil does not meet the academic entry requirements for admission to the school's sixth form. (All registered pupils are required to remain at school until the leaving date - last Friday in June. "At school" includes for these purposes approved educational activities undertaken off site, including work experience).
- the pupil has been permanently excluded and the exclusion has been upheld
- the pupil has been admitted to the school to receive nursery education and has not on completing such education transferred to a reception class at the school
- the pupil attends a special school and the LA gives consent for his/her name to be removed
- the pupil is a boarder at a maintained school or Academy and charges for board and lodging are payable by the parent of the pupil; and the charges remain unpaid by the pupil's parent at the end of the school term to which they relate.

If a school is told that a pupil is leaving to attend another school, staff at the school of departure should establish the pupil's new address, the name and address of the new school and the date the pupil will start there. Confirmation should then be sought from the receiving school. When this information has been obtained, the school should complete form EWN1 and return it to the local Attendance Team office. Whenever a pupil leaves a school a Common Transfer File (CTF) must be completed.

If a school is concerned about any aspect of a transfer or if a pupil has "disappeared" the matter should be drawn without delay to the attention of the Children Missing Education Officer by telephoning 01992 556867 or by written referral to CME Officer, Central Attendance & Employment Support Team, Room 134, CHO 135, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8DF. Further guidance and a referral form is available at www.thegrid.org.uk administration/pupil welfare/attendance.

Registers- Retention

Registers should be kept in a secure place for a period of not less than 3 years.

When computerised registration systems are used a print-out of the register should be made not less than once a month. A print-out of the register relating to a particular school year should be bound in a single volume and retained for a period of not less than 3 years.

Authorising Absence

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself,

oblige the school to accept it, if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered - or when no explanation is forthcoming at all - the absence should be treated as unauthorised.

Gaddesden Row JMI School communicates our policies with regard to the notification and categorisation of absence with parents.

All absence notes are kept for at least a term and when a pupil's absence is a cause for concern, the notes are retained until there is no longer a concern.

Absence is authorised if:

- the pupil is absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school')
- the pupil is ill or prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs
- the school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within walking distance of the child's home; and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA for any of the following: the child's transport to and from school; boarding accommodation for the child at or near the school; enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a school nearer to his/her home
- the pupil is the child of Traveller parents who 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 alternative provision
- there is a close family bereavement
- leave of absence has been applied for in advance and has been granted because of exceptional circumstances relating to the application. (Parents are reminded that they cannot expect, as of right, that the school will grant leave of absence)
- leave of absence should be granted to allow a pupil to take part in a performance within the meaning of s37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (c) for which a child performance licence has been issued. HCC will not issue a child performance licence where absence is required without the written permission of the head teacher.
- Absence should be unauthorised if no explanation is forthcoming from the parents or if the school is dissatisfied with the explanation.

Administrative Codes

There are several administrative codes which are not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. They must only be used in the circumstances described:

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (Code Y)

This code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes but is not counted as a possible attendance It may be used when:

- the school site, or part of it is closed due to unavoidable cause; or
- the transport provided by the school or the 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

- Not required to be in school (Code X)

is used to record sessions that non –compulsory school age children are not expected to attend

- Pupil not on admission register (Code Z)

enables 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.

- Planned whole of partial school closure (Code #)

should be used for closures that are planned or known in advance eg holidays, curriculum planning/training days (up to five per year) or the use of the school as a polling station

- Different Term Dates for Different Pupils (Code #)

can also be used to record staggered starts or induction days. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

Pupils who are engaged in off-site educational activities should be recorded as attending (or absent from) an approved educational activity using the appropriate code.

The key features of approved educational activity are that they must be:

- educational *and*
- approved by the school *and*
- supervised by the school or someone authorised by the school.

A pupil should be recorded as approved educational activity if he/she is attending:

- an approved work experience placement (Code W)
- a field trip or educational visit (Code V)
- an approved sporting activity approved by and supervised by someone authorised by the school (Code P)
- the pupil is attending an interview with a prospective employer, or another educational establishment (Code J)
- an offsite educational activity (Code B)
- The B code must not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing schoolwork. Gaddesden Row is ultimately responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. In using the B code, Gaddesden Row is certifying that the education is supervised, and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils.
- Dual Registered – at another educational establishment (Code D)
- 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. This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the school census. This code should be used where pupils are attending as ESC, hospital or special school on a temporary basis or for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children are known to be registered at another school for the session in question.

Flexi-schooling

Head teachers can agree to flexi-schooling arrangements where the parents take on the responsibility for their child's education for part of the school week. Head teachers are advised to consider any such requests from parents very carefully before agreeing to them and are advised to draw up a written agreement with the parent. Where agreement has been reached, pupils should be marked authorised absent from school during periods when they are receiving home education. (C)

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs. A part time timetable must be time limited and must not be treated as a long-term solution. The school should mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (C)

Requests for Family Holidays During Term time

Amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration (England) Regulations which came into effect on 1st September 2013 remove all references to family holidays and extended leave for holidays in term time. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is for the headteacher to determine what constitutes exceptional circumstances and for them to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181955/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

Appendix 1

**Children's Services
Director: Jo Fisher**



**Statutory Attendance and Participation Team P
RIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL - to be West Area opened by addressee only
Access, Inclusion and AP
ATTN: Parent/Carers**

**Children's Services
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point: AP1106
Apsley Campus, Brindley Way
Hemel Hempstead
Herts, HP3 9BF
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 0300 123 4043
Email: FPN@hertfordshire.gov.uk
My Ref: PNs
Date: 28th June 2024**

Dear Parents and Carers

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE LAW REGARDING PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, is being introduced following changes to the law. These new Government regulations will come into effect from 19 August 2024, and we wanted to bring this to your attention now, as it will affect when penalty notices are issued in Hertfordshire.

What are the changes?

1. There will be a new national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period for when a penalty notice must be considered.
2. The new rules mean you will no longer be able to take your child out of school for one week's holiday without a penalty notice being issued.
3. There will be an increase in the penalty fine from £60 to £80 if paid in 21 days. If the fine is not paid by the first 21 days, it will rise to £160 if paid within 28 days of being issued.
4. If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.
5. If a parent then commits a third offence in a 3-year rolling period, the local authority will need to consider other enforcement options available to them.

Please see FAQs below with more information about how the new rules may affect you.

We would like to thank parents and carers for their support in making sure that children do not miss any valuable learning time.

Yours sincerely

Kim Claridge-Taylor
West Area Service Manager
Statutory Attendance and Participation Team

FAQ

If I have been issued with a penalty notice before 19^h August 2024, will this be counted if I am issued with another penalty notice from September onwards? No, the new limits come into effect from 19 August 2024.

If I have already booked a holiday for next year, could I receive a penalty fine at the new higher rate?

Yes, if the absence has not been authorised by the Head Teacher of your child's school. Remember, only a Head Teacher can agree whether an absence can be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Who can be issued with a penalty notice?

- Each parent can receive a fine for each child who has had unauthorised absence from school.
- In education law, anyone who lives with a child and who has day-to-day care of the child is also considered to be a parent whether they are the biological parent or not. For example, this will include stepparents and partners.

Do the new rules only apply to holidays during term time?

No, it applies to all unauthorised absence from school including holidays. Unauthorised absence includes other absence that has not been agreed such as truancy, arriving late after the register has closed and failing to provide reasons for absence.

How do I request for my child to have leave granted during term time?

You must submit an Absence Request form at least 20 days before the proposed absence. It will be for your child's Head Teacher to make a decision as to whether there are exceptional circumstances that will allow them to grant the time off. Do not assume that the absence will be granted until you have received confirmation from the school.

Do the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence have to be taken all at the same time before a penalty fine is issued?

No, a penalty fine can be issued for any combination of absences over a 10-week rolling period. They can be consecutive or non-consecutive and can span over two terms.

What happens if I am issued with a penalty fine and I don't pay it?

Unauthorised absence from school is an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996. A penalty fine is an opportunity for you to settle out of court. If you don't take this opportunity, you can be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance.

What should I do if I am worried about my child's attendance?

In the first instance you should contact your child's school and ask for advice on how they can support you to improve the situation.

Appendix 2

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Present at off site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another educational establishment	Not expected to attend this session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils (Planned)	Not counted in possible attendances

Detailed advice on the use of these registration codes can be found at www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance

