

Attendance Policy

Myton School



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1. Policy statement

Philosophy

At Myton our core aim is to prepare students for lifelong success which is underpinned by our core values:

- **Creating self-assured learners:** Regular attendance is crucial for developing self-assured learners. By attending school regularly, students have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge, which in turn builds confidence and self-assurance. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to feel positive about their abilities and have a strong sense of self-motivation.
- **Removing barriers:** Great attendance is a key factor in removing barriers to academic achievement. By attending school regularly, students have access to the support and resources they need to maximize their academic potential. Students who attend school regularly are more likely to develop a strong sense of community and social cohesion, which in turn helps them to feel connected and supported.
- **Working together:** Great attendance is essential for fostering a sense of community and working together towards common goals. By attending school regularly, students have the opportunity to build harmonious and trusting relationships with their peers, teachers, and other staff members. This sense of belonging and community is essential for personal development and academic success.
- **Investing in futures:** Great attendance is crucial for investing in staff and ensuring they have the support, expertise, and knowledge to prepare students for success. By attending school regularly, students benefit from the experience and expertise of their teachers and other staff members. Regular attendance also helps to build strong relationships between students and staff, which in turn creates a supportive and positive learning environment.

Myton School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students and recognises this is best achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all, especially our disadvantaged students and those with SEND. Myton School understands that if students feel safe, and if they are succeeding both academically and socially then they are likely to attend school regularly and therefore will thrive educationally; with high attainment being linked to high attendance. It is the policy of our school to celebrate both attendance and attainment. When students do not attend school regularly, Myton works hard to identify the reasons why and will implement a solid plan to ensure students are supported to learn to their maximum potential. This might include careers guidance to support and encourage a sense of purpose and direction, providing the motivation to attend.

All staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. Myton recognises that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems. We will provide effective and efficient communications with students, parents, and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support to meet our objectives.

This policy is based on current government guidance, 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022' and Statutory Regulations.

Objectives:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, students and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

2. Definitions

In this policy there are some key definitions which will be used, we have referenced the meaning of these terms below for ease of understanding:

Persistent Absence - Where a student's attendance figure reaches 90% or below, they are deemed as 'persistently absent' from school.

Severe Absence - Where a student is absent from school more than they are present, therefore with an attendance figure of 50% or below, they are deemed as 'severely absent'.

Parents - For the purpose of this policy a parent means; All natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person and any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

Vulnerable students - For the purpose of this policy vulnerable students are those who;

Have a social worker or previously had a social worker;

Is a Child looked after;

Are Children with an Educational health care plan;

Are Children who are severely absent (their attendance in school is 50% or below).

3. Statutory/Legal Guidance

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 school¹.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. 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 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 was amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations in 2013 only allowing Head Teachers to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances. Holiday requests will not be granted.**

¹ The education Act 1996, part 1, section 7. Additional legal requirements may be found in *The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006*.

4. Key Staff and Contacts

School-based contacts

Role	Contact Details
Headteacher	Andy Perry
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Carolyn Haines
Attendance Senior Leader	Mark Aynsley
Attendance Manager	Aimee Durden
School Absence reporting line	01926 493805
Nominated Attendance link Governor	Mike Oldridge
All of the above can be contacted via the School office on 01926 493805	

Other useful contacts

Agency / Contact	Contact Details
Warwickshire Attendance Service	01926 476600
Access to Education team	01926 736323
Children's Social Care – Integrated Front Door Warwickshire County Council	1926 414144

5. Safeguarding

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. Absence can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when students are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if their numbers change.

Myton School recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absence as it will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm.

Myton School will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school and evidence of absences may be requested, such as medical evidence.

5.1 Children missing education

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022) leaders have ensured that:

1. Staff understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for students who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions) are in place.
3. Staff know that travelling to conflict zones could be an indicator of FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures are in place to ensure that we always inform the local authority when we plan to take students off-roll or when they:
 - a. leave the school to be home educated
 - b. move away from the school location
 - c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
 - d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or are permanently excluded

We will ensure that students who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a student leaves, we will record the name of the student's new School and their

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expected start date.

Staff will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the Local Authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff will be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

5.2 Vulnerable Students

Myton School routinely monitors the attendance of vulnerable students. If we have concerns about students, we work closely with outside agencies to ensure parents understand the importance of good attendance and attendance procedures. There are a number of ways we may² monitor the attendance of vulnerable students in addition to the universal daily process of monitoring attendance for all;

- a. Watch List - Vulnerable students are included on the school internal 'Watch List', the attendance of these students is monitored on a lesson-by-lesson basis and absences are reported to the appropriate staff member immediately and contact is made with parents/carers as needed.
- b. Daily school contact from the attendance team to parents/carers (and any external professionals such as social workers) for absences of vulnerable students or those at risk of persistent or severe absence.
- c. Warwickshire Flexible Learning Team – Heads of Year are in regular communication with the flexible learning team to ensure Ill Health students are engaged and progressing. The attendance of these students is captured daily.
- d. Dual Registration – Myton School maintains its responsibility to ensure that students who are dual registered are attending each day and progressing with their education.
- e. SEND – Students who have special education needs or disabilities who are poor attenders are monitored through the internal referral and monitoring panel (Alignment meetings). At regular meetings, attendance is discussed and tracked and interventions are put into place by senior leaders.
- f. Severely Absent Students - Students who are severely absent are assigned an attendance case manager who makes regular contact with the child and family to support them in removing the barriers to attendance and engage them back in to school. All contact and agreed interventions are robustly recorded and the impact is monitored regularly.

6. Leadership and Management

The role of the Head teacher/Governors:

- Ensure the attendance policy is implemented and regularly updated
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils in particular 'hard to reach'

Role of the Assistant Head teacher responsible for Attendance:

- Advise on and implement whole school strategies for improving attendance
- Ensure relevant procedures are followed for staff not meeting their statutory safeguarding requirements related to recording attendance
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.
- Hold regular meetings with the DSL and Local Authority support services such as Warwickshire Admission Service (WAS) and Early help.
- Hold regular meetings with Year team to ensure every child's attendance is 96% or above
- Meet and support Year teams to discuss strategies for pupils below 96% to prevent persistent absenteeism
- Identify attendance target groups.
- Monitor whole school attendance rewards and initiatives
- Ensure that all relevant staff are fully trained in procedures that relate to attendance
- Liaise with SENCo and DSL to identify students who would benefit from a referral to WAS

Head of Year:

- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.
- Ensure early intervention is in place to support students and families
- Meet with Pastoral Leader on a weekly basis to discuss attendance issues
- Monitor year group attendance and support with strategies to improve poor attendance and celebrate good/improved attendance
- Regularly meet with Assistant Head teacher responsible for attendance to identify key pupils who would benefit from further strategies being implemented
- Commission support via alignment meetings to remove barriers to good attendance for individual students
- Monitor attendance for every child in their Year group using the trackers
- At the end of every day ensure all registers are up to date, accurate and there are no N codes
- Promote excellent attendance via tutor time and through a reward system,
- Meet with parents/carers if there are attendance concerns
- Ensure students complete sanctions for lateness and reward students who have excellent attendance and whose attendance is improving

Pastoral Leaders:

- Work with form tutors and attendance leader to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern: all unexplained absences to be followed up.

- Work with the attendance leader to ensure there is two-way communication between parents/carers for all students absent for more than two days.
- Carry out home visits for students with unexplained absence of more than three days.
- To ensure that all registers are up to date and there are no N codes.
- Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns and consider appropriate levels of support required.
- Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents and Head of Year.
- To promote good school attendance by setting targets and reward 'good/improved attendance' certificates as appropriate.
- To ensure that students who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integration back in to school upon their return.
- To ensure that Early Help referrals are opened as necessary to support children in attending school regularly and on time.
- Ensure pupils who are late attend a same day break time detention
- Have learning conversations with pupils who are struggling with attendance and punctuality issues.
- Ensure attendance tracker is up to date every week with a child's attendance.
- To liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection as necessary.
- Identify any patterns of absence to HoY and to the Assistant Headteacher lead for attendance.

Role of the school Attendance Leader:

- Work with staff to ensure all staff meet their statutory safeguarding requirements related to recording attendance.
- Attend regular attendance team meetings.
- Record all reasons for absence as reported by parents on a daily basis.
- Check form registers are accurate so the fire register is produced each day.
- Produce a fire register on a daily basis and forward to Head of Year.
- Send daily text messages for all students absent and record reasons provided as a result.
- Meet with the attendance team fortnightly.
- Input paper registers provided by external supply.
- Support with referrals where necessary to support children with good attendance.
- Feedback concerns around policies and procedures via the team meeting.
- Ensure CME referrals are made for student that do not attend school regularly.
- Support with making contact with all students absent without reason for two days or more.
- Carry out a monthly official register check.

Role of the Form Tutor/class teacher:

- As the first point of contact with students, tutors are crucial in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Tutors/class teachers to ensure registers are completed within the first 10 minutes
- Identify any patterns in a student's attendance/punctuality, investigate all absences.
- Display attendance data and attendance information on notice board in tutor room

- Attendance figures discussed with tutor group on a weekly basis and the impact of absences on learning and progress.
- All lateness to be monitored and discussed with individual students.
- Report to the Pastoral Leader all students whose attendance/punctuality is raising cause for concern.
- Each tutor to have a caseload of pupils they work with in order to improve attendance/punctuality.
- Tutor to share pupils' attendance with tutees and parents regularly.

Role of the Parent Carer:

Section 444(1) of the EDUCATION ACT 1996 states that 'IF a child of compulsory school age who is registered student at a school fails to attend school regularly at the school the parent is guilty of an offence'.

- Parent/person with parental responsibility has a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends the school regularly and on time.
- Parents should support the school by avoiding, if possible non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school time.
- Parents DO NOT have an automatic right to take their child out of the school for a holiday or any other period of extended leave during term time.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence and if possible indicate day of return.
- Only the school within the context of the law can authorise absence this does not oblige the school to accept the reason for the absence.
- All unexplained absences will be investigated and parents will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.
- Attend meetings about their child's attendance; support the school in responding to concerns regarding attendance and work with the relevant Year team to help improve their child's attendance/punctuality.
- Parents who fail to fulfil their responsibility can expect legal action: this may include Penalty Notices/Fast Track to Prosecution/Parenting Orders.

Students:

- All students are expected to be on the school site by 8.35am appropriately prepared for the day.
- At 8.40am students should be in their registration room.
- Students who arrive after 8.40am must sign in at student support: their time of arrival at school will be recorded by the inventory system.
- All students late without a valid reason will attend a same day break time detention
- Students are expected to remain in school all day and will not be allowed to leave the school site without permission.
- Poor punctuality is not acceptable: students who consistently arrive late for the school day disrupt learning and miss out on valuable teaching time.
- Truancy from the school is taken very seriously and parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity. Students who truant from lessons will be expected to make up the time they have missed.

Role of the Local Authority:

- To meet regularly with the Assistant Head teacher for Attendance to examine the effectiveness of attendance interventions.
- To communicate regularly with the Pastoral Leaders to ensure Early Help Referrals and other interventions are in place.
- To support in home visits when required.
- To work with the school and families to create family support plans as necessary.
- To support the school in ensuring legal cases are taken forward as necessary.

² The way in which we monitor a vulnerable student will be on a case by case basis and these decisions are regularly reviewed between the attendance, safeguarding and pastoral teams in school.

7. Day to Day Attendance Procedures

7.1 Registers

Registers are taken each AM and PM session, and within the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Non-attendance is identified each morning and afternoon as well as within every lesson.

In the morning if the child has not arrived in school and we have not been informed of a reason the following actions will be taken;

- A text message will be sent to the parent/carers

If no appropriate response is received

- A telephone call will be made on the second day of unexplained absence

If no appropriate response is received

- A home visit will be completed on the 5th day of the unexplained absence.

The DSL notifies Children's Social Care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two consecutive days without explanation.

7.2 Absence and Punctuality

Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible to inform us if a child is to be absent or late on **EACH** day that the child is eligible to attend.

This can be done via;

- 1. Telephone:** 01926 493805 – **press (1) for attendance**
- 2. Text:** 07418-342163
- 3. Email:** attendance@myton.co.uk

Students are late if they are not in their Tutor room by 8.40am

The attendance team and tutors will monitor lateness and punctuality. Sanctions and parental contact will be used as appropriate.

Where parents are phoning in daily to report student absence the school will follow an 'Explained absence process'. An explanation from a student's parent does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

If a student is absent from school for more than 5 consecutive days, on the 6th day the absence will automatically be unauthorised until medical evidence is provided by the parents to the school or the parent makes contact with the school to discuss further. An explained absence that reaches a 6th consecutive day without medical evidence may then result in a home visit so that the school safeguarding team and the attendance team can speak to both the child and the parent and support can be put in place as needed.

7.3 Authorisation of Absence

We are advised by government legislation and Local Authority guidance that attendance can only be authorised if the following applies:

- Medical reasons - please note medical evidence and/or a parental written note will be asked for upon return to school for students whose attendance falls below the schools expected threshold (95%). **Medical evidence will always be required on the 6th day if a student has five consecutive days absence from school due to illness or the student's attendance is below 90%. Notes are to be returned to the Tutor unless specified otherwise.**
- Religious celebration observation
- If transport provided by the school/Local Authority cannot bring the child to school.

Absences may also be authorised for the following reasons, but this will be at the discretion of the attendance team and the Head Teacher:

- Where a Leave of Absence has been completed by parent/carer and is agreed by the Head Teacher
- Where a student has a medical appointment that cannot be changed e.g. a consultant appointment
- When the student has no fixed abode, their parent is engaged in a trade which requires them to travel, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and the student has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months
- Other exceptional circumstances e.g. family bereavement and for a limited period.

7.4 Medical Appointments

Where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours or in school holidays. However, we realise this is sometimes not possible. Students should come into school before and after appointments to ensure they miss as little lesson time as possible. Students should sign out and in at Student Support before leaving/upon their return to school.

8. Leave of Absence During Term Time

Arranging holidays during term time causes issues for many reasons:

- the student's education suffers;
- lessons and extra-curricular activities are missed;
- there is often no opportunity for teachers to set additional work or to assist a child in catching up on their return from holiday; and
- Parents may be in breach of their legal obligation to send their child to school.

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent, i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits.

9. Attendance Intervention

Intervention will follow a staged approach and students will be monitored and different strategies will be used depending on the stage they are at in the process outlined below and their personal situation. Myton School tracks attendance data forensically and uses this data to regularly decide upon the strategies as listed below.

Stage 0

100-97% attendance

- Tutor monitoring; Tutor will discuss absences with students to identify any informal support.
- Pastoral leader monitors the attendance of their year group and identify any patterns trends.
- Pastoral Leader identify students who are at risk of dropping below 97%
- Early intervention put in place by year group teams if required.
- Stage 0 letter sent as a reminder if attendance below 100%
- Tutor level rewards (for those with 100% attendance but also for improved attendance)
- Merits awarded and postcards/texts sent home for those with 100% attendance and improving attendance.

Stage 1

•96% and below

- Stage 1 letter sent
- Pastoral leader meets pupil to discuss any barriers the school can help or support
- Motivational Interview may be used to encourage and promote improved attendance.

Stage 2

•95% and below attendance

- Stage 2 letter sent. Actions can include; Motivational interview, internal target set, HOY meeting or contact, attendance lead meeting or contact, Medical evidence letter sent.
- Barriers to attendance will be discussed and support put in place to remove these
- Parent meeting to take place with Pastoral leader to investigate if any support can be put in place
- Referrals to external agencies as needed
- Praise postcards used if attendance improves following intervention.

Stage 3

•90% and Below - PERSISTENT ABSENCE

- Stage 3 letter sent. Compulsory medical evidence required for every absence.
- Parent meeting with HoY to investigate support required and consider a parenting contract.
- Actions at this stage can include; Attendance lead panel meetings, Case manager assigned by school to support overcoming barriers to attendance, Casework from Warwickshire attendance service, internal target, WAS letter outlining potential next steps if attendance does not improve.
- Barriers to attendance will be discussed and support put in place to remove these barriers
- Referral to external agency as needed
- Praise postcards used if attendance improves following intervention
- **If there is no improvement a stage 3 final letter will be sent which may lead to WAS casework and prelegal target issued. Parents may face legal action and a Fixed penalty notice (FPN).**

Stage 4

•50% and below - SEVERE ABSENCE

- Compulsory medical evidence required for every absence
- An attendance case manager will be assigned and have weekly contact with the child and family.
- Barriers to attendance will be discussed and formalised support put in place to remove these barriers.
- Referral to external agency as needed
- Stage 4 letter sent which may lead to WAS traded casework, pre-legal targets set by WAS
- Parents may face legal action and a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN).

This flow chart is a guide and each case will be assessed and reviewed depending on each students' individual needs and which interventions will be most effective in supporting them to improve or maintain positive attendance. Early intervention will be sought so students can be supported meeting their attendance targets. The nature of student absence is crucial when applying this approach and individual circumstances will be considered.

9.1 Attendance Incentives

Myton School promotes and incentivises good attendance on a continual cycle throughout the school year as we know it is vital to celebrate attendance on a regular basis. Examples of the way Myton School promotes good attendance includes:

- Messages to parents and students on the school website
- Praise postcards sent home for improved attendance
- Assemblies celebrating individual, tutor or year group attendance
- Prizes given to individuals, tutor groups or houses based on attendance. This is not based solely on the highest attendance, but may include the most improved attendance over a set period of time.
- Reward afternoons such as 'pizza party' or 'film afternoon'
- Stickers, stamps, postcards or other forms of recognition for excellent or improved attendance.