



SHARPLES PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Reviewed by | Governors |
| Date | September 2023 |
| Approved by Governors | |
| Date for renewal | September 2025 |

Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. All the staff at SharplesPrimary School take seriously their responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance and punctuality seriously disrupts the continuity of learning and undermines educational progress, not only for the child who is absent, but also for the rest of the class. It can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school. It is vital that children feel their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late.

This policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters. It describes our schools commitment to improving the attendance of all children. Everyone has a responsibility to support this process and to encourage high levels of attendance at all times.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

SharplesPrimary School expects the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.

We support pupils and their families to ensure that excellent attendance is achieved.

Overall Aims:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved, through rewards and incentives for good attendance and punctuality.
- To raise standards and ensure every child reaches their full educational potential, through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parents, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.
- To identify causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils and address them.
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them.

Rights and responsibilities for attendance/punctuality: The Legal Framework:

There are legal obligations on:

- The parent(s) to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register
- The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school
- The Local Authority to provide education and to enforce attendance.

Headteacher:

- To be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the policy.
- To deal with parental requests for extended leave.
- To consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with Bolton Local Authority policies and procedures.
- To liaise with external agencies such as the Early Intervention Team and make referrals where necessary.
- To ensure that rewards and incentives for attendance and punctuality are being used. Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long term absence.

Governors:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- If you have a link governor for attendance, or a committee responsible for attendance, add details of their role in the monitoring of pupil attendance.

Link Governor for Attendance: ????????????????

School Business Manager/School Administrator:

- To lead on attendance/punctuality issues, on a day-to-day basis, including liaising with/responding to parental enquiries.
- To oversee the analysis of termly data and respond to findings.
- To revise and amend the policy, as required.
- To carry out and record the outcome of first day calls, when a child doesn't arrive at school when no reason has been received.
- To check the school answer phone and take messages from parents/carers about pupil absence.
- To promptly inform the HT, if there are any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- To record reasons for absence and update class registers.

- To liaise with and report to outside agencies such as the Early Intervention Team and Social Care
- To report to the Local Authority, as requested.
- To support HT with the promotion good attendance and punctuality, through organising incentives.
- To ensure staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Inform parents of school procedures, when parents have failed to inform the school.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

- The designated senior leader is responsible for: G. Partington
- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is G Partington and can be contacted via the school office.

Staff:

- Class teachers and cover supervisors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office after resigration.
- To ensure quality first teaching every day; with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- Take a formal register of all pupils twice a day.
- To regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance. Provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children.
- Establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties, regarding for example, child protection. Work with pupils and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these.
- To feed back to parents about pupil attendance and punctuality at Parents Evenings.

Parents:

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Ensure their child(ren) are collected from school at the end of the day on time.

- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible. When this is not possible notify the school as soon as they are aware of the appointment and provide a copy of the appointment card/letter.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence for their child by 9.30am.
- Any requests for extended leave must be requested in writing see the office for a copy of the form.
- These requests must be two weeks before the absence from school. **Please note:** proof and an explanation of a holiday/time off in term time has to be given when completing the request for absence form.
- Should understand booking repeat extended leave in term time is unacceptable and is extremely detrimental to your child's education.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.
- Provide a medical certificate once a child has been absent for more than 5 school days.
- In the event of a trip abroad due to unforeseen circumstances such as a family emergency, proof of that emergency will be required.
- Should understand that if a child is absent for 20 days or more they risk losing their school place at Sharples.

Pupils

- Attend school everyday on time.

The Local Authority, through the Educational Welfare Service, is expected to:

- Support the school in improving attendance, through whole school initiatives and individual pupil interventions.
- Work with families and other agencies to remove barriers to good attendance.
- Ensure that parents are informed of their responsibilities in relation to attendance.
- Uphold and enforce the law in respect of attendance, child employment, and involvement in entertainment and child protection.

Punctuality

- Pupils who arrive after the doors have closed are considered late. Pupils who arrive after this time must enter school via the main entrance and sign the late register.
- The registers are closed at 9.15am. Any pupils arriving after this time will be regarded as absent for the morning session and coded as a 'U' unauthorised absence in the register.

- If a child is repeatedly late for school their parents will be contacted to remind them of their responsibilities and a letter will be sent. If the lateness continues the matter will be referred to the Headteacher for further action.

Medical Appointments

- Parents are encouraged to make all medical appointments outside of school hours.
- Absence to attend a medical appointment will always be an authorised absence.
- Parents should present the medical appointment card/letter when they collect the child to take them out of school.

Religious Observance

If a main religious festival occurs during the school term we understand that members of that faith group will be absent from school. Children will be given **ONE DAY** authorised absence for the actual central day of the celebration. Any additional days that the children are not in school around the time of the celebration will not be authorised. **For example, at Eid or Diwali, only one day may be taken off school.** Any additional days will be classed as unauthorised absence.

Leave of Absence requests

If parents/carers wish to take their child(ren) out of school during term time, for any reason, they must complete the Leave of Absence request form at least two weeks before the intended absence. This is located in the school office.

**The Government issued 'The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013' on 1st September 2013 .The amendments states that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This means that no term time holidays will be authorised from 1st September 2013.
(NB: Staff will not provide children with work to do during term-time holidays.)**

If the absence is not as a result of a family holiday, the Headteacher will review each request on an individual basis and may grant some or all of the absence as an authorised absence, if this is classed as exceptional circumstances, as agreed with The Governing Board.

The criteria for issuing a penalty notice will be reduced and a fine will be considered if a pupil has had 10 sessions (equivalent of 5 days consecutive or otherwise) of unauthorised absences in any two consecutive half terms. The Local Authority will issue a fine of £60, to be paid with 21 days, for **each** adult, living at the child's address, for **each** child, which increases to £120 within 28 days.

If a child is absent from school for a period of 20 days continuously they will be taken off roll at the school and the place offered to a child on the waiting list.

From 1st September 2018, Bolton Local Authority have changed the criteria for issuing a penalty notice and a fine will now be considered where a pupil has had 10 half day sessions (equivalent of five days - consecutive or otherwise) of unauthorised absence over the period of two consecutive half terms.

The Local Authority has introduced this change because of:

- *Requests from Headteachers to strengthen sanctions for unnecessary absence from school*
- *Increasing numbers of pupils who are classed as persistently absent*
- *An increase in the amount of absence due to family holidays in term time*

*The Local Authority will issue a fine of £60, to be paid with 21 days, for **each** adult, living at the child's address, for **each** child, which increases to £120 within 28 days.*

Communicating with Parents

A reply will be sent to parents and this information will be collated to ensure absences are monitored.

If records show that children are below certain levels of absence (see below), then our records will support the Headteacher to clarify next steps to encourage better attendance for children.

Staff Promoting Good Attendance

It is important that teachers are regularly promoting good attendance with their classes. Good class attendance is attributed to good teaching and this is celebrated.

Monitoring and Recording Attendance & Punctuality Class Registers

Class registers are recorded using SIMS. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of the School Office staff. Registers can be re-submitted in the case of a mistake or a pupil arriving after submission, but registers must be accurate.

The attendance and punctuality is monitored continuously and is reviewed by the School Business Manager and Headteacher on a termly basis.

IMPORTANT:

Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Monitoring First Day Absence

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer by 10.00 am, a first day absence call will be made.

The School Office follows this system:

- Message parents asking them to urgently contact school to explain their child's absence.
- If no reply to text message phone parents' contact number(s).
- Repeat this during the first morning of absence if no response.
- Phone emergency contact number(s) to get an up-to-date contact number for the parent/carer and update the school system accordingly.
- Speak to the parents face-to-face or by phone the next day and establish reasons for absence and update contact numbers.

The parent/carer is asked to provide a reason as to why the child is not in school. The absence reason is recorded next to the child's name on the first day absence sheet and this is filed in the absence folder.

The School Office must establish a reason for every absence. No absence should be left on the system as an 'N' (no reason given) code. If the School Office has not been able to contact parents after 2 days then the absence is recorded as unauthorised and other agencies informed as appropriate. If a child is absent for more than 5 school days we will require a medical certificate.

Sending Children home if they are ill

If a child feels unwell, the HT or DHT will make the decision that the teaching assistant or office staff can contact someone from the Emergency Contact list to come and collect the child. If a child has a record of poor attendance, staff must refer to the Head first before contacting parents.

Attendance Targets

The school is aiming to achieve an attendance target of 97%. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% and a parent/carer fails to inform school there is a clear strategy of intervention in place. The DfE guidance states that a child is at risk of becoming a 'persistent absentee' if their attendance falls below 90%. *Please note: Early September figures are to be used with caution due to data being skewed due to number of days in school.*

Escalation of Intervention

If a pupil's attendance falls below 95%

- A letter is sent home raising the concern as to why the child's attendance is dipping.
- The Class Teacher will speak to the pupil's parent on their return to school.
- The pupil's percentage attendance will be monitored for the next term
- This will be added to CPOMS.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 90%

- A letter will be sent home to the parents. They will be invited in to school to discuss their child's attendance with the Headteacher if there are concerns raised.
- Targets will be set to improve the attendance and the attendance will be monitored over the rest of the half term.
- Fixed penalty notice warning will be given if applicable.

If a pupils attendance falls below 85%

- Parents will be invited in to school to meet with the Headteacher.
- An action plan will be set up.
- A school attendance contract and support plan will be incorporated and Penalty Notice will be discussed if applicable.
- Outside agencies may be involved. (Early Intervention Team)
- Further absences may only be authorised if evidence is provided.

Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance will be a standing item on the newsletter and be celebrated in assemblies.

Attendance monitoring

At Sharples, we record every child's absence and late arrival on our signing in system, the HT monitors this at regular intervals and the DHT does this when HT is not in school. Initially, relationships with parents are built to ensure the home/school partnership solves any issues quickly. Sometimes there are barriers with communication due to some parents not having English as their first language. In this case, we use members of staff who can speak home languages to get communicate effectively.

Monitoring attendance

We monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level

Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

Sharples analyses attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families. We look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

We will:

Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families

Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school when applicable.

Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance such as offering free breakfast club.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, annually by G. Partington HT. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Letter for pupils who fall below 95%

To the Parents/Carers of: DOB:

Re: Attendance Record

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils, we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance gives cause for concern.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Overall School Attendance | |
| Of which Authorised Absence is | |
| Of which Unauthorised Absence is | |

????? has missed ?? **sessions** due to sickness (each session is a half day).

From September 2016, the DfE defines persistent absenteeism as less than 95% attendance. Our ?????? census records show that, for the period DATE to DATE, ?????? has a pattern of poor attendance and is at risk of becoming a 'persistent absentee', and we would like to see this improve.

Please contact the class teacher to discuss any concerns related to this matter.

Your child's attendance will be monitored next term.

Please note that, the Local Authority Early Intervention Team regularly monitors our attendance and punctuality registers and, where problems persist, will work with families to help resolve any issues. We will continue to monitor your child's attendance over the next few weeks and, where necessary, will arrange an appointment at school to discuss this with you.

Many thanks, in anticipation, of your support in this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Class Teacher

Letter for pupils who fall below 90%

To the Parents/Carers of: DOB:

Re: Attendance Record

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils, we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance gives cause for concern.

As per my previous letter, dated ???????, your child fell below 95%
Unfortunately, NAME's attendance has now fallen below 90%

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Overall School Attendance | |
| Of which Authorised Absence is | |
| Of which Unauthorised Absence is | |

????? has missed ?? **sessions** due to sickness (each session is a half day).

I would like to invite you into school to discuss this matter, please contact the school office on 01204 652149 by DATE (give 3 days).

From September 2016, the DfE defines persistent absenteeism as less than 90% attendance. Our ?????? census records show that, for the period DATE to DATE, ?????? has a pattern of poor attendance and is at risk of becoming a 'persistent absentee', and we would like to see this improve.

Many thanks, in anticipation, of your support in this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs G Partington
Headteacher

Letter for pupils who fall below 85%

To the Parents/Carers of: DOB:

Re: Attendance Record

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils, we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance gives cause for concern.

As per my previous letter, dated ???????, and our meeting dated ??????? your child has now fallen below 85%

Unfortunately, NAME's attendance has now fallen below 85%

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Overall School Attendance | |
| Of which Authorised Absence is | |
| Of which Unauthorised Absence is | |

????? has missed ?? **sessions** due to sickness (each session is a half day).

I would like to invite you into school to discuss this matter, please contact the school office on 01204 652149 by DATE (give 3 days). We will be setting up an Action Plan that you will need to adhere to, and discuss the need to invite outside agencies to support you to resolve this attendance issue.

From September 2016, the DfE defines persistent absenteeism as less than 90% attendance. Our ??????? census records show that, for the period DATE to DATE, ?????? has a pattern of poor attendance and is at risk of becoming a 'persistent absentee', and we would like to see this improve.

Many thanks, in anticipation, of your support in this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs G Partington
Headteacher