



Academy Trust

Arden Academy (Arden) is an academy maintained by Arden Multi Academy Trust

Name of Policy	Attendance Policy	
Lead	Nick Burke, Deputy Headteacher	
Governor Committee	BSII Committee	
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	September 2020 - Addendum added (pg. 28) – Managing Attendance during Coronavirus Pandemic	
	November 2021 – minor changes to wording by EWO	
	April 2022 – minor changes to wording	
	Autumn 2023 – minor changes	

Introduction

Arden Academy seeks to ensure that all its students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise their true potential.

- The Academy will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the Academy community feels wanted and secure.
- All Academy staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends the Academy regularly and punctually.
- The Academy will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping, and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/guardians who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- To meet these objectives we will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents/guardians and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Whole Academy Policy for Academy Attendance

1. To improve the overall percentage of students at Arden Academy
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with Arden Academy including students, parents/guardians, teachers and governors
3. To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/guardians and students
5. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and the Academy
7. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions
8. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Officer Mrs Suki Bains and with other services and agencies
9. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

Principles

Education is important. Missing school means missing out. Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day that the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence on the part of the parent/guardian that can result in legal action by Solihull Education Enforcement Team.

Every child is sometimes unhappy about attending school; families may be going through unsettled times that can make regular school attendance difficult. Any problems with regular attendance, especially any concerns about possible bullying or learning difficulties are best sorted out between the school, the parents/guardians and the child at an early stage. If a child is reluctant to attend, do not cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that school attendance does not matter; it may even make things worse.

Every half-day absence from school has to be recorded by staff at the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

School Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Arden Academy will follow procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Arden Academy will make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised. The school will refer all pupils where there is unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more - the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Handbook pathway on children missing from education is in [Appendix 2](#). This provides further information and guidance on children missing from education, emphasising the link between poor school attendance and safeguarding concerns.

The attendance lead (EWO) and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will work closely to manage risks, ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly. Arden Academy use the Solihull Multi-agency Thresholds Criteria (www.solgrid.org.uk/safeguarding) which is summarised in [Appendix 3](#) to identify the level of concern and provide the appropriate level of support.

Definitions

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason; however this will still affect the child's school attendance. Examples of unavoidable causes include medical/dental appointments/illness or unavoidable family circumstances/family funerals which cannot be taken outside of school hours.

Unauthorised absences are those that the staff at school do not consider reasonable/exceptional. These are an offence on the part of the parent/guardian and include:

- Keeping children off school without a good reason (examples include: babysitting a sibling; revising for a test or exam; dispute with a fellow pupil; attending an event – such as graduation or wedding - of someone who is NOT a parent or sibling)
- Truancy from a whole session
- Absences that have never been properly explained, i.e., reporting a child absent without an explanation
- Children arriving at school too late to get a mark – arriving at school after 10.00am without a note and valid reason for being late will constitute a missed session.
- Taking leave during term-time.

Parents' Responsibilities

Parents/guardians are expected to report all absences on a daily basis before 8:30am – see Appendix I. Parents are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. School can involve the EWO, Mrs Bains, to offer support and advice on attendance matters. Mrs Bains can also offer support to children and their parent/guardian.

Procedures

The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. These children are called 'persistent absentees' by the Government, whatever the reason for their absence. Special procedures may be applied to children at risk of falling into this category. Our EWO Mrs Bains will be monitoring these pupils on a weekly basis with key staff and making contact with parents/guardians and speaking to pupils at school to discuss the reasons as to why attendance is less than 90% and see what support can be provided to improve attendance. Mrs Bains has a statutory duty to refer unauthorised attendance to The Solihull Inclusion Team to consider if any legal action/penalty notice needs to be considered.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

1. Give attendance a higher profile at Arden Academy - Arden Academy has key staff with responsibility for attendance
2. To produce weekly/fortnightly reports for Key staff who have attendance responsibility
3. Produce termly/annual reports to parents/guardians/governors
4. Contact parents/guardians as soon as attendance falls below 95%. Contact should be maintained on a regular basis until 95% is reached
5. Each student will be set attendance targets at the start of each term. Progress towards these will be monitored on a weekly basis by tutors/HOY. Contact with parents/guardians should be maintained on a regular basis until 95% is reached
6. Hold a New Intake Evening and make attendance an item on the agenda
7. Contribute attendance matters to Arden Newsletter
8. Provide INSET training on attendance for appointed staff. EWO Mrs Bains to support
9. Display materials at focal points – tutor bases, etc.
10. Discuss all attendance issues with Mrs Bains Education Welfare Officer/Heads of Year meetings and in relevant staff meetings
11. Reinforce the reward systems, including trophies, certificates, end of year/term prizes, weekly on the spot prizes, 100%/personalised postcards home to the child
 - Persistent absences are reported to Heads of Year half termly
 - Attendance issues are highlighted during weekly Pastoral meetings
 - The child is called to meet with their pastoral team to discuss why they're missing school
 - The child's attendance is monitored for a period of time after this initial meeting
 - If the child's attendance continues to deteriorate, the child and the child's parents/guardians are called in to meet with the child's pastoral team
 - A clear and frank understanding must be reached as to the reasons for the child's absence
 - Strategies will be proposed to help improve and monitor attendance, for example, the child might be asked to sign in at their Pastoral Office every morning; supervised learning can take place; changes may be made to room plans or timetables, etc.
 - A further deterioration in attendance will result in a second meeting with parents/guardians and the implementation of a Parenting Contract which will cover an agreed period of time. The Contract is signed by both Arden and the child's parents/guardians and failure to make improvements will result in the final course of action:
 - The school will refer all persistent absentees to Mrs. Bains, EWO, who will consider making a referral to The Solihull Education Enforcement team to consider issuing a fixed penalty notice.

Arden's procedures to for maintaining registers including the procedures for marking registers:

Procedure	Person responsible
1. Registers must be taken at the start of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session	Form Tutor
2. On each occasion a school must record whether a child was present, absent or late.	Form Tutor
3. Pupils should only be marked present if they are in the room when the register is called.	Form Tutor
3. Spaces must not be left in the register	Form Tutor
4. All pupils should be in their form group and seated by 8.40am for morning registration on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Registration commences at 9.00am on Wednesdays. The morning register will close five minutes after this. (Children arriving at school after the gates close will have to sign in and will be marked late and receive a detention). Similarly, afternoon registration takes place at 1.25pm and the register closes at 1.30pm.	The student
5. During the day, pupils can only exit the premises through the Main Reception area. Only pupils being collected by a parent/guardian for an appointment will be permitted to leave. Teachers will alert the Attendance Officer when a child is missing from their lesson. The Attendance Officer will then investigate the whereabouts of the pupil by contacting other staff and initialising a search of the premises. If a child remains missing, parents/guardians and the local PCSO/Police will be contacted.	The parent/guardian & the student Teachers Deputy Headteacher

Every half a day of absence from school has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the Deputy Headteacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the Headteacher. [see The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013.

Arden has procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks.

Attendance registers may be kept manually or electronically.

School complies with and uses the DFE compulsory national attendance codes

Strategies for Improving Attendance and Lateness

Pupils are informed that poor attendance, i.e., below 90% is measured every half term and persistent lateness, i.e., more than six lates in an academic year, could mean that they are not eligible for school trips and events. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis and extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration.

How the Educational Welfare Officer can help

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way an attendance action plan can be put into place (agreed targets of attendance, weekly review with the child, regular communication with parents and the use of attendance panels). Difficulties can be resolved by meeting with your child's pastoral team, talking through problems and proposing strategies to help improve attendance, the school may offer parents a formal Parenting Contract, or refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement wherever possible but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, the EWO has a statutory duty to refer the matter to Solihull Education Enforcement Team who can use legal proceedings if required, including Penalty Notices (fines) or prosecution.

Alternatively, parents/guardians or pupils may wish to contact the EWO (Mrs Bains) themselves to ask for help or information on 01564 773348.

Working in Partnership with Parents

Absence

If a child is absent from school parents should contact the school on the first day of absence by 8:30am and maintain daily contact with the school throughout the absence.

When your child is not at Arden - for any reason - it is important that we know of their whereabouts primarily for safety reasons. Arden has two methods available to you for reporting absences:

1. Edulink
2. Dedicated phoneline

There is no need to use both methods as this causes unnecessary duplication.

Absence can include a full or partial day and can be due to illness, medical/dental appointments, holidays, external music exams, funerals, college interviews, etc. Our view is that if your child is not on the premises, then they are missing, it is then your responsibility to report the reason for this. Your child's attendance record will then be coded properly to reflect this.

You can report an absence using the Edulink App or use the Absence Line which is 01564-773348, menu option 1. Please refrain from sending text messages to this number. If the absence continues for more than one day, you must call daily. The Absence Line will ask you to say (1) your name, (2) your child's name, (3) your child's form and (4) the reason for absence. Upon return, your child must bring with them a note to confirm/further explain the reason for their absence.

If your child has to leave during the course of the day, for any reason other than unexpected illness, the teacher will expect to see an appointment card or letter from a parent/guardian. Permission will then be

sought from a senior member of staff and your child must then be collected by a parent/guardian and signed out in the 'Signing In and Out Book' in Reception. It is very important that you sign this book. Upon return to Arden, the child must be signed back in in the same book again.

If your child becomes unexpectedly ill during the day, then you will be informed and they must be collected by a parent/guardian and the Signing In and Out Book filled in. If they are still unwell the following day, then you must report this using Edulink or call the Absence Line.

It should be pointed out, that if you take your child away from Arden during term time for a family holiday, this will be treated as an "unauthorised absence" and will be referred to the local authority to issue a penalty notice.

In the event of a family funeral, a child's absence will be authorised for 1 day. If more than 1 day is required, for example the funeral is some distance away, then you must write to your child's Head of Year to confirm this.

In the event of an unexplained absence, we will have to contact a parent/guardian (or person listed on the child's contact list) to ask why your child is not at Arden. If we are unable to get hold of anyone, your child's record will show an "unauthorised absence".

Reasons for Authorised Absence

It is not possible for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, minding the house, birthdays, day trips etc. Leave may however, be granted in an emergency or for genuine pastoral reasons (e.g. after the death of close relative).

Parents/guardians are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school time wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, staff should be informed (in advance if at all possible). A 'present' mark can still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole day.

Illness:

Not every illness needs to keep your child from school. If you keep your child away from school, be sure to inform the school **DAILY** before 8:30am. Use common sense when deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day? If not, keep your child at home.
- Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff? If so, keep your child at home.
- Would I take a day off work if I had this condition? If so, keep your child at home.
- Children with diarrhoea and/or vomiting should be kept off school until at least 48 hours after their symptoms have gone. Most cases of diarrhoea and vomiting in children get better without treatment, but if symptoms persist, consult your GP.

It is Arden's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parent/guardian's note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern. In exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness may be requested

However, we can challenge parent/guardians' statements or seek additional evidence, e.g., doctor's note, if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

High levels of absence due to illness will be brought to the attention of the attendance lead (EWO) and the Head of Year.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Attendance is less than 90%
- Attendance is deemed severe and less than 50%
- There are frequent odd days absences due to reported illness
- The same day of the week is taken off over a period of time
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated
- Where there is a particular medical problems and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support

Who's responsible?

The people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

- Mr Nick Burke, Deputy Headteacher
- Mr Dan Last, Director of Pastoral Care
- Mr Sully Anwar, Director of Learning Support (for SEN pupils)
- Dr Lauren Webb, Director of Pupil Premium
- Mr Nick Burke, Designated Lead for Looked-after- Children
- Mrs Suki Bains, EWO (Education Welfare Officer)
- Ms Anna Venables, EWO (Education Welfare Officer)
- Mrs. Allison Meadows, Attendance Officer (for reporting). The school has a legal duty to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. School staff are committed to working closely with parents/guardians as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Please work with us.

Requests for leave of absence (exceptional circumstances)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Procedure for requesting a planned absence

- All leave of absence requests will be unauthorised unless the circumstances are exceptional. A parent/guardian should complete an Absence Request Form ([Appendix 4](#)) and submit this to the school at least two weeks prior to the date required. School will respond to the request within two weeks. If school is aware of any language difficulties that may preclude a request form being completed appropriate support will be offered to the parent/guardian.

- DFE guidelines make clear that leave of absence during term-time should be regarded as exceptional. An example that can be given is that during 2012 London Olympics all police leave was cancelled. As a result for that specific timeframe it was agreed that requests for leave for the children of Police officers affected by the cancellation of their leave would be treated as exceptional.
- If a parent/guardian considers they require their child to have a leave of absences for exceptional circumstances they should complete the Absence Request Form which can be obtained from the school office ([Appendix 4](#)). There is a requirement that parent/guardians provide evidence of the exceptional circumstance and may be required to meet with the Deputy Headteacher.
- Where the Deputy Headteacher is satisfied that there **are** exceptional circumstances to warrant the request of the leave of absence but has additional concerns such as the timing of the absence, parents/guardians will be asked to reconsider based on these concerns
- If the Deputy Headteacher deems that the reasons for the request are exceptional and authorises the absences a letter confirming that the request has been authorised will be sent to the parent/guardian ([Appendix 5: model pro forma](#)).
- If the Deputy Headteacher deems that the reasons are not exceptional and the leave of absence will not be authorised. A letter informing the parents of this decision for each child and warning of the legal implications of the absence been taken will be sent to each parent. The letter provided in this guidance (appendix 6) must be used.
- If once notified in writing of the decision to not authorise the leave of absence, the absence is taken it will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the pupils register. The absences will be referred immediately to the Education Enforcement Team by the attendance lead (EWO) by forwarding all the relevant paperwork for consideration and could result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice.

Other reasons for absences:

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time, notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons.

The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays or child minding.

Examples of authorised absence may include: days of religious observance, for example, we authorise one day for Eid celebrations; illness; medical appointments; family funeral; wedding of parent or sibling.

Parents are advised to make appointments for dentist/doctor or optician outside of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible afternoon appointments are preferable.

Parents can support regular school attendance by:

- Making sure their child leaves for school with plenty of time to arrive on time.
- Supporting and encouraging their child by attending parents' evenings and other events.
- Contacting the school to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance.

- Working partnership with the school to resolve any issues that are impacting on their child's attendance.

Lateness

A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his/her continuity of learning, but also that of others. If your child is late, they must sign in late and record the time of arrival. Arriving late, without a valid reason **and** note, will result in a 30-minute detention. Please ensure that your child/children arrive on time for morning registration which is at 8.40am (9.00am on Wednesdays).

If your child arrives late because they had a medical/dental appointment or were feeling unwell first thing in the morning, then they must arrive with a letter confirming/explaining this. They will receive a "Late" (L – up to 10.00am) or "Medical" (M – after 10.00am) mark, however, no detention will be given.

Arriving after 10.00am without a valid reason and note will result in an unauthorised mark (O code) which will affect your child's percentage attendance.

Routine Dental/Medical Appointments

If possible, please avoid taking your child/children out for *routine* dental/medical appointments. If the children are late or taken out for routine visits, then this obviously causes disruption for the Academy and it breaks the continuity of the child's learning.

All planned lateness must be reported on the Absence Line by 8:30am.

In summary, children must attend on time and be present in morning and afternoon registration to be given a present mark for the session.

Where a pupil arrives and misses form time without a valid reason, this will be classed as an unauthorised late and a same day detention issued.

School registration will close at 8.50am or 9.05am.

Poor Attendance

Those children whose attendance falls below national average will be closely monitored and further action considered. School will challenge the attitude of those pupils and parents/guardians who give a low priority to attendance

All registers will be checked and absences monitored on a regular basis.

Schools will analyse individual pupil data to identify quickly patterns of absence which cause concern and parents will be informed by the school where their child's attendance causes concern.

School has a clear and escalating approach to intervention where there are concerns regarding school attendance.

After school has attempted to address attendance issues with parents/guardians, and if there is no improvement the Education Enforcement Team will be informed where the child's attendance remains a concern.

School has in place a system for enabling returning pupils to catch up on learning and re-integrate within the school.

Appendix 1

Arden Academy Roles and Responsibilities for School Attendance

Role	Responsibilities
Schools Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (eg pupil registration, attendance registers) • Setting Attendance targets • Reviewing school attendance • Agreeing and Reviewing School Policy • Chairing attendance panels
Deputy Headteacher & Attendance lead (EWO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with relevant legislation Putting into practice school policy • Authorising/unauthorising absences • Leave of absence requests • Line management • Contact with parents: overview of clear and escalating interventions • Responsibility for links with Education Enforcement Team • Planning and attendance at attendance panels • Recording and evaluation of interventions • Data analysis • Promoting school attendance • Management of reward scheme • Pupil Profiles
Attendance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First day calling • Late arrivals • Maintaining registers • Late arrivals • Attendance targeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process for clearing registers - Day to day responsibility for escalating approach • Day to day responsibility for escalating approach
Class teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking registers • Promoting importance of regular schools attendance • Providing early warning of attendance concerns • Positive role modelling • Following policy and procedures

Appendix 2

Children missing from education pathway

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Staff in education provision should follow the provision's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential, pupils need to attend regularly. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing in their area.

All education providers should:-

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Ensure parents perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- Ensure all pupils are punctual to school and lessons
- Ensure they liaise with the named social worker where Children's Social Work are engaged with the child or family

School Requirements

The **law** requires schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. Schools should use the national absence and attendance codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collection statistics through the School Census System. The codes are detailed in School Attendance (DfE, May 2022 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1105095/WITHDRAWN-School_attendance_guidance_May-2022.pdf Please note the requirements around the use of the L and U code, and requirements for recording attendance of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller pupils.

Schools should promote good school attendance and put in place appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions. The local authority model attendance policy and attendance toolkit are useful resources to support this work. <https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/behaviourattendance/Behaviour%20and%20Attendance%20Toolkit/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

It is essential that staff are alert to signs to look out for, and the individual triggers to be aware of, when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM, CSE, forced marriage.

Involving other agencies and signposting:

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent, without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

Email: educationenforcement@solihull.gov.uk or telephone 0121 779 1737.

Pupils at risk of harm/neglect - Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected schools should follow child protection procedures. If there is reason to suspect that a crime has been committed or the child's safety is at risk, the police should also be involved.

Solihull Children's Services:

MASH (0121) 788 4333

Out of Hours (EDT) (0121) 605 6060

Solihull MBC LSCB procedures for Children who have Gone Missing from Home or Care

http://solihullscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_ch_missing.html

Solihull MBC LSCB procedures for Children Missing Education

http://solihullscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_safeguard_educ.html

If the school do not know where the child (and family) are and have made reasonable enquiries (including liaising with the police and Social Services), they can refer to the Child Missing Education team for further checks and advice.

School Action:

- (1) Email address childrenmissingeducation@solihull.gov.uk
Telephone: 0121 704 6145
- (2) Complete CME notification form
<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/management/cme/Forms%20%20Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Families of members of the Armed Forces

Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently – both in UK and overseas and often at short notice. Schools and local authorities should contact the MOD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) on 01980 618244 for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for those children when the family moves.

Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families

Research has shown that many children from these families can become disengaged from education, particularly during the secondary school phase. Pupils are particularly vulnerable at transition from primary to secondary where a GRT pupil leaves school without identifying a new destination school. Schools should inform the CME team as soon as they become aware that a secondary school application will not be made for a GRT pupil. Although many are settled, some GRT families move regularly and their children can be at increased risk of missing education. Schools should work with families to minimise disruption to GRT pupils' education, for example if the family need to travel in order to work, they should be supported to dual register with other schools.

Persistent Absence

The definition of persistently absent (PA) pupil as set by the DFE for 2015 - 2016 is a pupil with 10% or more absence (90% or less attendance). The table below, derived from the census guidance, gives an indication of the minimum number of sessions a pupil would miss by each half term to be classed as PA.

Half-term	10%
Half-term 1	7 or more sessions
Half-term 1-2 (autumn term)	14 or more sessions
Half-term 1-3	20 or more sessions
Half-term 1-4 (autumn term and spring term combined)	25 or more sessions
Half-term 1-5	31 or more sessions
Half-term 1-6 (full academic year)	38 or more sessions

A pupil profile template which will support schools to identify the issues impacting on PA pupils and detail actions to be taken is available on the Solihull MBC attendance toolkit

[https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/BehaviourAttendance/GPGATPS/Attendance%20Pupil%20Profile%20revised%20\(2\).doc](https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/BehaviourAttendance/GPGATPS/Attendance%20Pupil%20Profile%20revised%20(2).doc)

Solihull Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

- 1 Where a request for **leave of absence** has been made and the school have sent written notification to parents/guardians that the absence will be unauthorised a **penalty notice** will be issued where **the trigger of 10 sessions** of unauthorised absence is met.
- 2 In all other cases of unauthorised absence accrued over time, a **Warning letter** will be issued by the SMBC Enforcement Team prior to a penalty notice. The trigger for a warning letter will be at **least 10 sessions** of unauthorised absence.

A penalty notice may be issued, subsequent to a Warning letter, if there are a **further five sessions** or more unauthorised absences. Relevant paperwork can be found at <https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/BehaviourAttendance/GPGATPS>

Education Enforcement Team contact details:
Email: educationenforcement@solihull.gov.uk
Telephone: 0121 779 1737

Deletion of pupil from the admission register

Schools must notify the local authority when they remove a pupil from roll in line with the Removing Pupils from Roll: Guidance for Schools

<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/management/cme/Forms%20%20Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents/guardians and are being educated outside the school system, eg: elective home education (EHE). Schools must not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- have been 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, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to school at the end of that period
- have been permanently excluded

Additional Guidance

Guidance including an additional letter for when parents do not request a leave of absence but school become aware they have taken a holiday in term time is available at
[https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/BehaviourAttendance/GPGATPS/Family%20Holiday%20Requests%20FPN%20Schools%20Sept%202015%20EEO%20version%20\(2a\).doc](https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/BehaviourAttendance/GPGATPS/Family%20Holiday%20Requests%20FPN%20Schools%20Sept%202015%20EEO%20version%20(2a).doc)

Resources, Guidance and Legislation on CME

Removing Pupils from Roll: Guidance for Schools (SMBC, September 2011)
<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/management/cme/Forms%20%20Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

School attendance: Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (DfE, October 2014)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/361008/Advice_on_school_attendance_sept_2014.pdf

Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs: Statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE, January 2013)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269469/health_needs_guidance_-_revised_may_2013_final.pdf

Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England: A guide for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion (DfE, 2012)
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/269681/Exclusion_from_maintained_schools_academies_and_pupil_referral_units.pdf SMBC Exclusions Documents
<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/management/exclusions/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Solihull MBC model attendance policy
<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/behaviourattendance/Behaviour%20and%20Attendance%20Toolkit/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Solihull MBC attendance toolkit
<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/schoolissues/behaviourattendance/Behaviour%20and%20Attendance%20Toolkit/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Solihull MBC CME notification form

<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/management/cme/Forms%20%20Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Solihull MBC removing pupil from roll notification form

<https://extranet.solgrid.org.uk/management/cme/Forms%20%20Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Keeping Children Safe In Education (2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Children missing education: Statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE January 2015)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/395138/Children_missing_education_Statutory_guidance_for_local_authorities.pdf

HMCI Advice Letter (July 2015)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444746/Advice_letter_from_HMCI_on_the_latest_position_with_schools_in_Birmingham_and_Tower_Hamlets.pdf

Appendix 4



ABSENCE REQUEST FORM This form must be posted/delivered/emailed to school at least two weeks before a planned absence. The email address for all absence-related issues is absence@arden.solihull.sch.uk

Please note that there is no automatic right for pupils to be granted authorised leave of absence and requests will only be considered where there are exceptional circumstances.

Name of Pupil: _____ Form: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____	Signature of Parent/Guardian: Print Name: _____ _____ Date: ____/____/____
Leave of absence from date: ____/____/____ To date: ____/____/____ Total Number of days: []	

Please detail below the **exceptional circumstance** why you are requesting to take your child(ren) out of school. You may be invited into school to discuss your request with the Head of Key Stage. Please attach supporting evidence.

Leave of absence which has not been agreed will be marked as unauthorised. These may be referred to Solihull MBC for issuing a Penalty Notice.

School Use Only:

Previous requests for LoA ? YES/NO	% Attendance:
Evidence provided for exceptional circumstances? YES/NO	Arrange to meet Parent/Guardian? YES/NO DATE/TIME:

Appendix 5

Authorised Exceptional Leave of Absence Standard Letter

[date]

To the Parents/Guardians of NAME

Dear

RE: LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FOR [NAME], [DATES]

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request form in respect of the above child.

I write to confirm that on this occasion I am able to authorise your child's leave of absence due to the exceptional circumstances that you have outlined.

Requests for leave of absence are never taken lightly and in making this decision I have accepted your reason and from the evidence provided that the absence is unavoidable. The absence will therefore be marked as authorised in the attendance register.

Yours sincerely

Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 6

Unauthorised Leave of absence letter

DATE

To the Parent/Guardian of NAME

Dear [BOTH PARENTS TO BE ADDRESSED]

RE: LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FOR [NAME], DATED

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request form in respect of the above Pupil.

On this occasion I am unable to authorise your child's leave of absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that: If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence.

This means that children are expected to attend school every day unless the reason for their absence is unavoidable, such as illness.

I have carefully considered your request and do not accept that the absence is unavoidable.

If you decide to go ahead with the proposed leave of absence, *(name of child)* absence of *(how many sessions)* will be marked in the register as unauthorised. These unauthorised absences will be referred to Solihull Council and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to each parent. The Penalty Notice is a fine of up to £120 for failure to comply with the law on school attendance.

Yours sincerely

Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 7

Date

Dear *(individual Parent)*,

Child: DOB: Class:
Dates applied for: to

Re Leave of absences request for pupil detailed above

It has come to my attention that your child was absent from school due to a Leave of Absence taken in Term Time. I understand this absence was due to ...**example: Family Holiday/funeral** as **(state how you know EVIDENCE IS REQUIRED examples: (first day calling, social media, pupil information.** As stated in the school policy and previous communications to parents, I am not able to authorise your child's absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that: If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence.

(name of child) absence of *(how many sessions)* will be marked in the register as unauthorised. These unauthorised absences will be referred to Solihull Council and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to each parent. The Penalty Notice is a fine of up to £120 for failure to comply with the law on school attendance.

Yours sincerely

Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 8:

Attendance Profile

Name:

Form:

Date:	Att. % (attach registration certificate)	Siblings :
SEND <input type="checkbox"/>	EHCP <input type="checkbox"/>	Young Carer <input type="checkbox"/>
FSM Y/N	Exclusion no days :	LAC Y/N
<p>Current school interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Early Help <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum support <input type="checkbox"/> Exclusions <input type="checkbox"/> Report <input type="checkbox"/> Child Protection Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Enforcement Notice <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Health Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other 		<p>Other agencies currently involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Early Help Engage Service <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Offending Team <input type="checkbox"/> Solar Mental Health Service <input type="checkbox"/> Child Protection Plan, <input type="checkbox"/> Child in Need Plan, <input type="checkbox"/> Looked After Child, <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist Inclusion Support Service (i.e. ESBD, Hearing Impairment etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Mental Health <input type="checkbox"/> Solihull Integrated Addiction Services <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Young Carers Service <input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> SMBC Child Sexual Exploitation Team <p>Other please specify.....</p>
<p>Key Issues (including reasons for absence if known):</p> <p>Pupil Developmental Needs (for example, Educational Needs, Behavioural Needs, Social Relationships, Health Needs)</p>		

Parenting Capacity (parental engagement, attitude towards education, routine and boundaries, parental issues such and drug and alcohol misuse)

Family and Environmental Factors (Housing, Finance,)

Historical Attendance Concerns?

Action Plan:

Profile completed by:

Review date:

Appendix 9

Processes for rewarding good and improved attendance

Positively Promoting School attendance

- School has a display board that promotes the importance of school attendance with parents.
- School uses class and whole school displays to promote attendance with pupils.
- School assemblies are used to promote the importance of school attendance.
- Classes have attendance targets to work towards.
- Rewarding good attendance
- Good class attendance is rewarded weekly through a class award (SAM bear/Class cup)
- Good class attendance is rewarded termly.
- Individual pupil attendance is rewarded termly by certificates for children with 95% and higher attendance
- Individual good attendance is rewarded annually by book vouchers, presentation, certificates
- Good attendance is recognised in the pupil's school report.
- Good attendance is recognised with parents through regular letters home.
- Improved attendance is recognised
- Individual rewards
- Letters sent home to parent
- End of Year Awards Ceremony (Colours and Certificates issued)
- Electronic Praise Postcard

Appendix 10

Sanctions in place for poor attendance and punctuality

Punctuality

- Parents/guardians can monitor their child's Edulink to monitor their punctuality. If a student receives 3 or more lates across a school week with there being no legitimate reason for these lates, the student will be issued an after-school detention of 1 hour the following week either on Wednesday or Friday. If the student accrues 3 or more Wednesday or Friday after-school detentions they may be prevented from attending certain school trips or events including Prom.
- Students will receive a strike for lateness and a Behaviour Point (three strikes results in a detention) if they arrive to school later than 8.40/9.00am, unless they have a legitimate reason **and** proof in the form of a letter from a parent/guardian or appointment letter from a hospital/doctor/dentist for their late arrival.

Attendance

- Persistent Absences (more than 10%) where there is no legitimate reason, will result in students being prevented from attending certain school trips including Prom.