



Mendip Edge Federation

Attendance Policy

Rationale

To ensure that children make excellent progress in their learning through good attendance enabling them to benefit from the direct support of timetabled classes, outside classroom experiences and extra-curricular activities

Aims:

- To promote good attendance at school.
- To have a record of pupils who are present on the school site, at any given time, in case of fire or other emergency.
- To promote punctuality as a life skill
- To have a twice-daily record of pupils who are present on the school site
- To ensure that the school is well informed about reasons for all absences.
- To keep a record of pupils' attendance, punctuality and reasons for absence.
- To support the families who for genuine reasons may experience attendance problems.
- To have procedures to manage unexplained or persistent absence.

Policy into Practice

Recording Attendance – Taking Registers

- Class teachers are responsible for taking attendance registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Attendance is recorded on the Sims attendance module using the codes:

Reg Codes	Description	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning	Basic mark	
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session	Basic	
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session	Basic	
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic	
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
D	Dual registration	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic	
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
I	Illness	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic	
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Late for session	Basic	
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
O	Unauthorised Abs	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic	
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic	
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session	Basic	
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic	
W	Work Experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic	
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic	
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional c...	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic	
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic	
Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic	
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session	Basic	
@	Do Not Use	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session	Basic	

- Pupils enter school from 8:45am and registration is 8:55am. If they arrive after this time, but before 9:10am, they will be marked as 'late'. The register closes at 9,10am and if a pupil arrives after this time they are marked as 'late after registration closed' and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Any pupils arriving or leaving during the school day sign 'in' and 'out' at the Main office.

- Registers are taken again at the beginning of the afternoon session.
- Registers are checked by the office staff in the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Persistent unauthorised absence, even in the case of lateness, could ultimately lead to a Penalty Notice being issued.

Recording and Reporting Absences

The decision to register an absence as authorised rests solely with the school as outlined in DFE Guidance.

- Parents are asked to inform the school in advance of any known absences e.g. hospital appointments, providing a letter or appointment card wherever possible.
- Parents are asked to telephone the school before 9:20am to report absence due to illness. An absence help-line is available out of office hours and until 9:20am.
- Reasons for absence are recorded in an absence book and the appropriate code entered in Sims. Where appropriate further details will be added in the notes section.
- If no reason for a child's absence has been supplied a text message will be sent using the automated system linked to Sims. If this does not generate a response a phone call will be made to the main contact and if a reason is still not given a letter will be sent. Where a child's attendance is already a cause for concern or there are safeguarding issues, attempts are made to immediately ascertain the reason for absence from other contacts listed on Sims or Children's Social Care.
- Where no reason is supplied the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- For pupils with poor attendance, or a pattern of broken weeks, medical evidence may be required to support absence and without this the school may not authorise the absence. Evidence can be an appointment card or a copy of a prescription.

Term Time Leave

The DFE authorises the Headteacher to use their discretion in determining the decision to authorise leave or not. In line with DFE 2013 amendments:

- All requests for term time leave must be made in advance, in writing. Forms are available from the Main Office.
- All requests for holidays will be unauthorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The DFE suggests exceptional circumstances may include:
 - Forces staff returning from lengthy active service abroad
 - Police, Fire Service being told when they can or cannot take leave
 - If a close family member has a terminal illness and it may be a last chance to be together.
 - Parents having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum period.
- A letter will be sent confirming whether the leave has been agreed or refused.
- Where parents remove their child for an unauthorised holiday, this will be recorded in the school attendance register as unauthorised absence (G). Parents will be warned that this and any accrued unauthorised absence may be referred to the Local authority attendance officer and may result in a warning notice or fixed penalty notice.

Missing Children

If a pupil or family seemingly disappears, the school complies with government guidelines in that every attempt will be made to make contact with the family and ascertain a forwarding address/school. In such cases a 'Missing in Education' form is completed and forwarded to the LA. In such cases the school will liaise with the EAO and follow advice.

Monitoring Attendance

The school has a legal responsibility to monitor pupils' attendance. All parents are reminded regularly of the importance of good attendance.

- Individual children's attendance is checked daily. Reasons for absence are checked. (See Recording and reporting absences above)
- Attendance reports are run to establish attendance at or below 95% or 90% and analysed for improvement/ deterioration. These form the basis of the cause for concern list.
- Where a child's attendance is a cause for concern and showing no improvement parents are invited to a meeting with the Headteacher to improve the outcomes.

- Advice about individual cases is sought from the Education Welfare Service and where a pupil reaches the thresholds a request for involvement can be made. See Appendix A
- All parents are informed at least termly of their child's current attendance levels and the implications of this either verbally or in writing. (Template letters are held in each individual school).
- Further information on the Somerset County Council School Attendance and Children Missing Education policy can be found at <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/policies/school-attendance-and-children-missing-education/>

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE – REQUEST FOR INVOLVEMENT

From [] School/Academy

- 1. Request for Education Welfare Involvement []
2. Request for Penalty Notice application following:
• Term time leave 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence G code (This will result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice) []
• 10 or more unauthorised sessions (in a period of no more than 12 school weeks) (This will result in a warning period being given before a Penalty Notice is issued) []

NB: The Penalty Notice or Request for Involvement process will only be considered if a pupil has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within the previous 12 school weeks.

I certify that [] date of birth []
year group [] is a registered pupil of compulsory school age, on roll at this school/academy.
He/she had [] sessions of unauthorised absences between the dates below
[] and []

To the best of my knowledge, the person/s with parental responsibility for this pupil is/are:

Title (Mr/Mrs) [] First Name [] Surname []
Relationship to student [] Father / Mother / Carer / other (please specify)
Address []
Post Code []
Tel No []
Is parent/carer aware of request for Penalty Notice / EWO involvement? Yes [] No []

To the best of my knowledge, the person/s with parental responsibility for this pupil is/are:

Title (Mr/Mrs) [] First Name [] Surname []
Relationship to student [] Father / Mother / Carer / other (please specify)
Address []
Post Code []
Tel No []
Is parent/carer aware of request for Penalty Notice / EWO involvement? Yes [] No []

CAF completed? Yes [] Not offered [] Refused []

SENCO Involvement? Yes [] No []

Declaration:
I hereby certify that the information given in this form is true to the best of my knowledge. The information has been extracted from the school’s current records – copy of register attached.

Signature _____ Name (Print) _____

Position _____ Date _____

This form will be used in legal action relating to non-school attendance (unauthorised absence) of a registered pupil at the school. The Headteacher or a representative should send the completed form to your Education Welfare Officer. Please refer to the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct for full details.