

School Attendance Policy

Step by Step School is committed to providing a full, effective and efficient education to all pupils (The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7) and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach his or her full potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

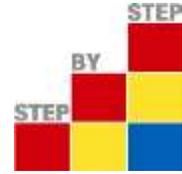
School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Head Teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late,

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using the appropriate code. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 9.30am. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time with an acceptable explanation (e.g. school transport was delayed) will be coded as late.

During times of national restrictions caused by the pandemic, it may be necessary to stagger start times, so a late registration mark would be given 15 minutes after the agreed start time.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. Pupils arriving after 10.15am will be registered as absent for the morning session.

In other cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. If parents/carers know their child will be late, they should advise the school office by 9.00am.

If a pupil is persistently late, the concerns will be addressed initially with the parent and class leader. Ongoing concerns will be raised with the Head and Teacher in Charge.

First Day of Absence

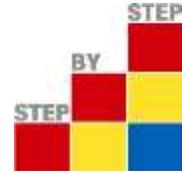
Parents/carers will be expected to contact the school office by 8.30am if their child is ill and unable to attend school, giving the reason for absence. If a call has not been received by 9.45am, an administrator will contact the parent/carer to establish the reason for absence. This information will then be relayed to the person responsible for the school register, to record as required. Parents should phone school daily to notify of ongoing absences.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Term dates are issued to all parents before the beginning of the school year and can also be seen on our website (<http://www.stepbystepschool.org.uk/wp/term-dates/>). Any changes to these dates will be notified by letter or email to the parents.

Parents should not take their children out of school for family holidays or trips abroad during term time. Any absence request in term time will be reviewed by the Head Teacher and only approved in exceptional circumstances.

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Requests for leave of absence during term time should be made to the Head Teacher in writing on the appropriate form **Appendix 1**. Each request will be judged on a case by case basis.

Medical or dental appointments

We understand that some of our pupils have additional health appointments due to the complexity of their needs. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

The registration system

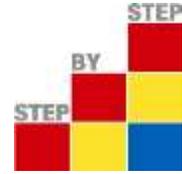
The School uses an electronic registration system (The School Pod) for keeping the school attendance records. Attendance is recorded, twice daily, morning and afternoon. National codes are used to record attendance information. **Appendix 2**

During periods of national restrictions, caused by the pandemic, the school is required to report attendance to the Department for Education using a pre-determined form, initially daily, moving to weekly from 1st October 2021. The addendum to attendance reporting from the DfE for the 2021-2022 year is included in this policy. **Appendix 3**

Pupil attendance and punctuality is monitored on an ongoing basis and attendance is reported to Governors once a term. The School Partnership Advisor (SPA) also checks attendance during half termly visits.

Individual pupil attendance is reported to the placing Local Authority and parents/carers at the annual review.

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Children Missing Education (DfE 2016)

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education. Local authorities should focus their resources effectively in intervening early in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

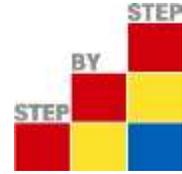
Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school should undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Schools must monitor pupils' attendance through their daily morning and afternoon registration. The school will inform the local authority of a pupil's attendance at each annual review. It will also inform local authorities of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly and cases where unauthorised absence reaches more than 10%. Children Missing Education Procedures will be followed where the school has concerns.

The school will monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education so it is vital that schools make judgements on a case by case basis.

Attendance for any pupils in the school that have a Looked After Child (LAC) status is monitored by their local authority with a daily welfare call. Local authorities may also monitor the attendance of other pupils via a regular welfare call to the school office.

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A flowchart to assist parents/carers in reporting their child's absence is included at the end of this policy. Appendix 4

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Head Teacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Head Teacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and implementing strategies to improve attendance with other members of staff.

The Office Staff

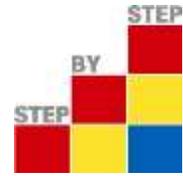
The office staff are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information onto the electronic register and to the Department for Education as required.

Covid 19

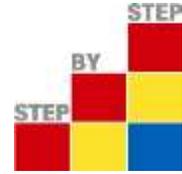
Since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic, the school follows all DfE guidance with recording attendance.

Policy	Attendance
Statutory requirement?	Yes
Approved	October 2021
Responsible Officer	GA

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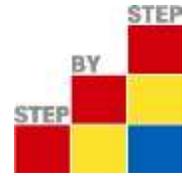


Responsible Governor/s	AB
Date of previous version	September 2020
Frequency of Review	Yearly
Date of next Review	October 2022



Appendix 1: Request Leave of Absence

Name of child
Class
I am applying for leave of absence for my child from:
Number of school days:
The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested:
Has your child had leave of absence or other absences already in this school year? YES/NO
If YES, please give dates and details:
Signed (parent/carer):
Print Name:
Date:
Address and contact number:
To be completed by the Head Teacher
Having considered your request carefully and in view of Government regulations, my decision is that leave of absence is:
Fully approved – The absence will be authorised
Partly approved - school days will be authorised. Any remaining days will be unauthorised
Not approved – The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.



Explanatory notes:

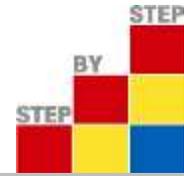
Signed:

Date:

Appendix 2: Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised

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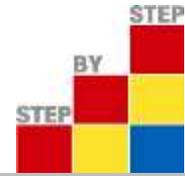


		sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

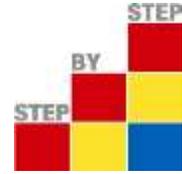
Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		

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G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Appendix 3: Addendum to attendance Monitoring 2021-2022

Attendance expectations

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education

Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19

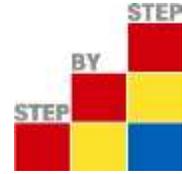
This category must be used to record sessions that take place in the 2021 to 2022 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from Public Health England (PHE), or its successor UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19

This category must only be used to record where a pupil is not attending for the reasons set out above. It should not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

The [schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#) sets out when pupils should self-isolate and when they ought to be tested in the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

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Examples in which ‘not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19’ could apply

In line with current legislation, and guidance from PHE (and its successor the UKHSA) and DHSC, examples are as follows Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they have symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.

If a pupil tests negative and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

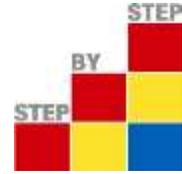
Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed COVID-19

Pupils who are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to self-isolate. They should instead get a PCR test, and should only self-isolate if they test positive. If they do test positive, they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

As usual, parents should plan their holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, the school should use code X in the register.

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Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable when shielding is advised

Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. All clinically extremely vulnerable pupils should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend.

If shielding is advised nationally or in a local area again, by DHSC, PHE or UKHSA, then pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from DHSC, PHE or UKHSA should be recorded as code X.

Pupils who are self-isolating but who have not had a PCR test

In line with public health advice, pupils with symptoms must self-isolate and schools should strongly encourage pupils to take a PCR test. Where the pupil is unable to take a PCR test, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register.

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the [school attendance: guidance for schools](#).

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around COVID-19, we expect schools to offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

Reporting your child's absence

Details of your child's attendance is reported to the Local Authority at their annual review.

Absences not previously authorised or explained will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised absence of more than 10% will be reported to the Local Authority when your child reaches that trigger.

