



# MANOR

MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Creating

Futures

TOGETHER

## Attendance Policy



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## 1. Aims

At Manor MAT we are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- › Promoting good attendance
- › Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- › Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- › Acting early to address patterns of absence
- › Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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 behaviour and 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](#)

It also refers to:

- › [School census guidance](#)
- › [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- › [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The Trust Board - Directors

The Trust Board of Directors is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the Trust'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

### **3.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Support and Challenge Advocates, Trust leaders and Directors as required
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

In each of our schools, a Senior Leader will be designated to lead attendance. The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › 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
- › Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- › Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see [section 7](#))
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher
- › Working with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed penalty notices

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office each morning and each afternoon. Each of our schools will identify the times of the day this will be completed by.

### **3.6 School admin/office staff**

School admin/office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- › Transfer calls and messages from parents/carers to the attendance lead and to teachers in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### 3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child(ren) attends every day (morning and afternoon) on time
- › Call the school to report their child(ren)'s absence before the start of the school day on the day of the absence, each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child(ren)
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child(ren) are made outside of the school day

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

Each school will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

The school will take the attendance register 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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry
- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See [Appendix 1](#) for the DfE attendance codes.

The school will also record:

- › For pupils of compulsory school age: whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school on time on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at the start of the school day and at the start of the afternoon session and closed no later than 15 minutes after the start of each session (Please see each of our school's individual school times)

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by the start of the school day or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin office staff (see also [section 7](#)).

The school will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. They will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the reported illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

Leave of absence for other reasons than medical reasons can be requested by asking the school for a leave of absence form and these will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to [section 5](#) to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

## 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

## 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil the school expects to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. All our schools will have a documented process ([Appendix 2](#)) that outlines their first day absence protocol to ensure they have reasons for all absences and appropriate safeguarding processes are followed when families cannot be contacted for first day absence.

## 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child(ren)'s attendance and absence levels through the school's data management system (Bromcom) on a daily basis and will include their overall annual attendance in their end of year school report.

# 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

## 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance – [The Education Act 1996 S444\(3\) \(c\)](#), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which [their] parent belongs"
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional; leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there WILL be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations, the Headteacher may use their discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.
- Children of service personnel about to go on deployment (permission would be considered as long as the request is accompanied by a letter from the Commanding Officer).
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of the above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the CEO prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

Each school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 15 days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The Headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents therefore need to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of the following factors which may help to reach a decision:

- the exceptional circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
- time of the academic year when the leave has been requested
- duration of the absence – number of school days being missed
- the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
- the child's current attendance and punctuality rate and overall attendance pattern
- exceptional term time leave requested/taken in previous academic years for a similar purpose
- whether the parent/carer made the request in advance
- pupils due to take any statutory testing arrangements (KS2 SATS, Y1 Phonics and year 4 MTC) will not normally be granted leave of absence.
- whether parent/carers have considered limiting the amount of time the child would be absent from school e.g. wrapping around school holiday
- have alternative care arrangements been considered by the parent/carer to limit the time away from school
- impact on any interventions, assessments or referrals being undertaken with the child or family e.g. family support, social care assessments, CAMHS, SEN
- the impact that the absence will have on the child.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Exceptional circumstances (as outlined above)

**Examples of any circumstances that are NOT exceptional are as follows:**

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, except where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence will be requested.
- Holidays taken in term time due to lower cost/parental work commitments.
- To care for other family members
- Birthdays
- To interpret for other family members
- Friendship problems
- Head lice
- Weddings abroad – regardless of whether it is for immediate family members
- Family Anniversaries
- School refusal

*(The immediate family is a defined group of relations, used in rules or laws to determine which members of a person's family are affected by those rules. It normally includes a person's parents, spouses, siblings and children. It can contain others connected by birth, adoption, marriage, civil partnership, or cohabitation, such as grandparents, grandchildren, siblings-in-law, half-siblings, adopted children and step-parents/step-children, and cohabiting partners)*

**\*All attendance whether unauthorised or authorised affects a child's overall percentage\***

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

Each school, in partnership with the local authority, can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child(ren) from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher and the decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. **All funds from fines are collected and kept by the Local Authority.**

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good and improved attendance is rewarded regularly through celebration assemblies with certification and in a variety of ways.



## 7. Attendance monitoring

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

All of our schools will:

- › Monitor attendance and absence daily, 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 executive leadership team and Support and Challenge Advocates.

### 7.2 Analysing attendance

Each school will:

- › Analyse 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
- › 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

Each school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/school leaders and Trust leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families and about how the school can challenge and improve attendance.
- › Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### 7.4 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/carers 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
- › Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the CEO. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board of Directors.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- › Child protection and safeguarding policy
- › Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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 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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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

<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in academy	Pupil of non-compulsory academy age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned academy closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## **Appendix 2: Individual School first day absence procedures**

1. Class registers to be completed and saved by 9:00am
2. Late children to be checked against registers by 9:20am
3. Office Team to check attendance.
4. First day phone call to first name on contact list. If there is no answer, a message will be left asking to return the call and inform school of the reason for absence.
5. The second contact will then be called.
6. All contacts will be called until a reply is received. If none of the contacts answer, an email will be sent to named contacts asking for them to contact the school and inform us of the reason for absence.
7. Attendance lead/DSL will be alerted that this child is absent, and no contact has been made.
8. Attendance lead/DSL risk assesses the current level of concern and considers whether circumstances warrant a home visit.
9. Home visit to be made following decision made by attendance lead/DSL
10. If no response at home, post First Day Calling notification through letter box with a time limit to contact school.
11. DSL/DDSL will contact the Police to initiate a "safe and well" check if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child.