

# Inspire - Enable - Achieve



## The Vale Federation Attendance Policy

Revised February 2020

This policy was adopted on

February 2020

The policy is to be reviewed by

February 2021

## Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. The establishment of a close home-school partnership is vital in working to achieve this.

A good level of attendance (which is considered to be 95% and above) has the following impact:

- Access to planned curriculum activities and therapeutic input;
- A sense of security;
- Familiarisation with boundaries, structure and expectation;
- Positive impact on 'whole child' progress;
- Setting the foundations for a positive work ethic.

## Legislation and guidance

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

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulation 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulation 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulation 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulation 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulation 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

## Parents and carers should:

- Ensure that your child has a good level of attendance;
- Ensure your child is ready for their Local Authority transport when it collects at the start of the day, or, ensures that they arrive punctually at school
- If a regular early collection at the end of the day is required, then parents should ensure that they discuss this with their child's Head of Department, and completes the relevant form – this arrangement should cease as soon as possible
- Parents must ensure that the school has at least two up-to-date contact numbers so we can get in touch with someone if, for example your child does not arrive when expected. This is part of our duty to keep children safe.
- Try to ensure that routine medical appointments happen outside the school day (although we acknowledge that this is not always possible);
- Ensure that you notify the school of the reason of child's absence before 8am on each day that your child is absent;
- Ensure that 'leave for absence' forms are filled in for any non-medical absences in advance of any absence;
- Ensure that any additional input you source privately for your child does not have an impact on their attendance at school;
- Discuss any difficulties regarding attendance with your child's head of department.

We acknowledge that the range of complex needs of some of our young people can, for example, make them more prone to illness and hospitalisation or to have high levels of emotional anxiety. It must be recognised that consistent attendance leads to effective learning and we therefore encourage full attendance wherever possible. It is in this context that the school attendance policy is written.

## School procedures

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

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for three years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by Booker Park - **9.00am**

Stocklake Park – **9.15am**

### **Booker Park**

The Register for the first session will be taken at **9.00am** and will be kept open until **10.00am**. The register for the second session will be taken **KS1- 1.00pm**  
**KS2- 1.30pm**

Both Key stage registers will be open until **2.00pm**.

### **Stocklake Park**

The Register for the first session will be taken at **9.15am** and will be kept open until **10.30am**. The register for the second session will be taken **KS3- 1.15pm**  
**KS4- 2.00pm**

Both Key stage registers will be open until **2.15pm**.

## **Attendance Monitoring**

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.

The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. This adds up to missing almost half a term. These are called “persistent absentees” by the Government, whatever the reason for their absence, including authorised absences. Special procedures may be applied to children at risk of falling into this category.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

In order to prevent children from becoming Missing from Education, the school is legally required to notify the Local Authority of all children removed from our registers outside normal transfer times, whatever the reason.

Parents are requested to provide the school with all the necessary information about future addresses, new schools etc. In the event of planned changes of address etc. Any information the school holds will be passed to the relevant local authorities as required.

## **School staff 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 the policy. The curriculum and standards committee is responsible for attendance.

### **The Principal**

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

### The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Principal
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

### Class teachers/seniors

Class teachers and seniors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office.

### Admin staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. Should we not be notified by a parent/carer regarding the reason for a pupil's absence, a member of the admin team will call to check the reason why the child is not at school.

## **Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### Granting approval for term-time absence

Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as –

**“An exceptional circumstance is of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time”**

Parents/carers **must** ensure that any request for taking their child out of school during term time is:

made on the appropriate form – available from the school office or from the website.

made **very** clear on the form why this is an exceptional circumstance bearing in mind the **definition of exceptional** outlined above.

made prior to the absence giving time for full consideration to be given to the request (it is recognised that there may be some circumstances where this is not possible)

All the circumstances will be carefully considered by the Principal in consultation with members of the Senior Leadership Team. The parents /carers will be informed of the decision. It is advised that parents/carers only make arrangements, especially those involving costs, after the absence has been agreed.

Please note that a request for a term-time holiday is NOT a parental right. Leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances but arrangements should not be made without the school's agreement in advance.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. SEN needs of children are taken into consideration. A leave of absence is entirely at the Principal discretion.

### **Authorised absence**

Valid reasons include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointment- Parents 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.
- Religious observance related to the beliefs of the family e.g. Eid , Diwali
- Absence previously agreed by the school for exceptional reasons under the agreed definition
- The transport provided by the school or local authority is not available and where the pupils home is not within walking distance.

### **Lateness and punctuality**

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

### **Following up absence**

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 code to use.

Monitoring of Children's Attendance Procedures

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
<p>Admin team to email monthly summaries of pupils' who's attendance lies below 90% to HOD. (over the calendar month)</p> <p>If HOD is aware of a genuine reason for absence (e.g. significant illness, agreed leave etc.) then no further action.</p> <p>If there is no known genuine reason then text message to parents to be sent, alerting them to their child's poor attendance.</p>	<p>Admin team to email termly summaries of pupils' who's attendance lies below 90% over the term to the HOD.</p> <p>If HOD is aware of a genuine reason for absence (i.e. significant illness, agreed leave) then no further action.</p> <p>If there is no genuine reason for the low attendance, then a letter to be sent to parents, detailing the expectation that this improves over the coming term.</p>	<p>Should a pupil's attendance be under 90% over the course of two terms, then parents will be invited in to discuss it.</p> <p>If necessary, the following actions could be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectation that a doctor's note/ appointment letter is provided to the school to justify any absence for this reason</li> <li>• Referrals to Social Care/CAMHS</li> <li>• Start Local Authority attendance protocols</li> </ul>

NB: Pupils may be fast-tracked to Stage 3 in cases where, for example, there is a lack of engagement from parents, safeguarding concerns, significantly low levels of attendance etc.

## Registration 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 supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual register	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 education visit/trip organised or approved by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

## Authorised absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on holiday that was not approved by the school - Principal decision
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with the reason for pupil absence – Principal or Head of School decision
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed – Principal/HoS decision

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/nation emergency. The transport provided by the school or local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not walking distance.
Z	Pupil not 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