

Greater Manchester Education Trust

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

V2.0

Parrs Wood High School

Approval History

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1 AIMS

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to achieve their full potential. Greater Manchester Education Trust is committed to ensuring that every student achieves in line with their potential and our academies recognise the value of regular attendance and its contribution to success. Our academies will adopt a systematic approach to ensuring good attendance for all individuals and groups of pupils and use a range of information to swiftly identify and act on causes for concern, supporting our students and their families in improving attendance and removing barriers to achievement.

As set out in our policy, we will work with our families in a variety of ways to identify the reasons for attendance issues and address and resolve any difficulties. The approach taken is aligned with the 'Support First' strategies outlined in Working Together to Improve Attendance.

2 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and 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) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Working Together to Improve attendance (May 2022)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3 ATTENDANCE REGISTER

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all students 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 (*see paragraph 5*). It will mark whether every student 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

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Each school within the trust will have a localised attendance procedure that includes

- Students' expected arrival time in the Academy
- The time that the register for the first session will be taken and until what time it will be kept open.
- The time that the register for the second session will be taken after the lunch break

4 WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

When students are not present in school their absence disrupts the pattern of their education, disrupts teaching routines and will have an adverse effect on the learning of others and also presents safeguarding risks.

Students who attend for the full number of published student days will achieve 100% attendance for the academic year and are highly likely to achieve the greatest progress for their ability, enabling them to continue their studies and raise their future and earning potential in the world of work. We know that the students with the highest progress and attainment at the end of key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment and progress. The lower a student's attendance, the greater the impact is on their achievement at school.

Attendance percentage relating to learning days lost per academic year

Percentage Attendance	Days Lost
98%	4
95%	10
90%	19
85%	29
80%	38
75%	48

We know that some students find achieving high levels of attendance difficult and therefore we will work in partnership with families at all stages to try to remove any barriers and to put in place the right support at the right time.

5 PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

At Greater Manchester Education Trust, our aim is for all students to achieve at least 98% attendance and we recognise that attendance below this will impact on a student's achievement.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- give details of whole academy attendance in our messages to families and the community.
- report to families on their child's performance at the academy, giving their attendance percentage and punctuality details, and how this relates to their attainment.
- celebrate good attendance.
- reward good or improving attendance.
- work with families and partner agencies to provide advice, challenge and support where attendance is a concern.

We will:

<p style="text-align: center;">EXPECT</p> <p>High standards of attendance from all students and parents and maintain an academy culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MONITOR</p> <p>Using attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND</p> <p>Talk with students and families to understand barriers to attendance and agree how we can all work together to resolve them.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FORMALISE SUPPORT</p> <p>Where absence persists and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work with other agencies and advise families of the possible consequences if absence remains a concern. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ENFORCE</p> <p>Where all options have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect a student's right to an education.</p>

Punctuality

Prompt arrival to school and for individual activities during the school day supports effective safeguarding of students and prepares them for the expectations of life outside of school. To that end students are expected to arrive promptly to lessons and lateness will be recorded as such and will be sanctioned where there is no suitable reason for lateness.

Morning registration begins at 08.35 and closes at 09.05. Afternoon registers open at 14.05 and close at 14.35. Arrival outside of these times will be marked as lateness/unauthorised absence and sanctioned as such where there is no justifiable cause.

5.1 Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Each academy within the trust will have localised strategies to promote good attendance which will include; rewards, sanctions, assemblies, meetings with parents and other levels of support. Low levels of attendance mean lost learning time which has a negative effect on student progress. Please refer to appendix 4 for levels of attendance and associated responses.

As standard our academies will:

- View and respond to daily attendance and punctuality information
- Monitor weekly patterns of attendance and identify actions through leadership and attendance teams
- Share this information with pastoral and classroom colleagues for discussion with students.
- Examine half-termly data reports against previous patterns and local and national data benchmarks
- Maintain a risk-register approach to the assessment of emerging concerns regarding students and how those concerns will be addressed, tracking the impact of interventions
- Examine attendance information alongside analysis of information relating to other areas of a student's education

6 TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence will be classified by the academy (not by families), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised** in accordance with the categories as set out in 'Chapter 8: Contents of the attendance register' of [Working Together to Improve Attendance](#) (February 2024 - see Appendix 7).

6.1 Authorised absences

Authorised absences include mornings or afternoons absent for a valid reason such as illness, urgent medical/dental appointments or other emergencies (see Appendix 1). All non-urgent medical or routine dental appointments should be arranged outside of the academy day or during the holiday periods. Where this is not possible, **students should attend the academy before and after the appointment**. Families should provide the appointment letter, prescription or medication to enable the absence to be authorised as appropriate. If students are required to leave early or be absent from lessons for an urgent appointment, parents should telephone or email with this information.

If a student is absent for 5 days consecutive days due to illness, contact will always be made with families and medical evidence will be required in order to authorise the absence. Additionally, if a student has 5 separate occasions of illness, then we will request medical evidence to authorise any further absence.

Students who have permission to leave during the day should report to the attendance office where they will receive a permit slip with the time and date they will be leaving. Students should present this to their teachers to leave lesson. The student will then report back to the attendance office where the permit slip will be stamped as a record of being signed out. The student should then immediately leave the site via reception.

6.1.1 Religious Observance

The Trust acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside holiday periods or weekends. The authorisation of absence, or special leave for religious observance, will be considered in these instances, but families are requested to give advance notice if they intend for their child to be absent. Greater Manchester Education Trust feels that it is reasonable that **no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance or festival and no more**

than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

6.1.2 Traveller Absence

Our aim for children within travelling families, in common with all other children, to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible. To protect traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school.
- The child is undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service.
- The child is undertaking computer-based distance learning that is time evidenced.

6.2 Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the academy does not consider reasonable and may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter and a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority. Each academy may request that the LA take statutory action if a student has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. A penalty notice may then be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment. Please refer to appendix 5 for further information on the statutory action escalation pathway.

Unauthorised absences include:

- truancy during the academy day.
- absences which have no proper explanation.
- persistent absence due to illness that has no supporting medical evidence.
- students who arrive late to the academy after the registers have closed.
- absence for the purposes of shopping, to look after other children or celebrate birthdays.
- families keeping children away from the academy unnecessarily.
- day trips or holidays taken during term time.
- excessive absence due to medical/dental appointments without good reason or evidence.

Families will be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. Families may also be asked to provide medical evidence where their child is absent for 5 consecutive days or more, or where there are repeated instances of absence.

6.3 Granting approval for term-time absence (See appendix 1)

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. Each school will have their own list of

exceptional circumstances due to the needs of the community. However, exceptional circumstances are likely to include the following:

- acute family trauma
- terminal illness or death of a family member
- if a family member serves in the Armed Forces - Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays
- following advice from a health professional
- out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement

6.4 Persistent Absence

Students are classified as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more school sessions in an academic year. Students are, therefore, classed as persistently absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised.

We monitor all absence thoroughly and support and intervention will be provided by each school for students who are persistently absent or at risk of becoming persistently absent.

All our persistently absent students are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with local academy policy. Mentoring is offered and support for learning where absence affects attainment. This may include support from partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health in addition to enforcement where interventions do not improve attendance.

6.5 Severe Absence

A student is severely absent when they miss 50% or more schooling across the academic year, for whatever reason. Students are, therefore, classed as severely absent irrespective of whether absence is authorised or unauthorised. Schools and local authorities are specifically expected to have agreed a joint approach for all severely absent students.

All severely absent students across GMET are subject to weekly review and actions are agreed in accordance with school-level procedure. Help and support will be offered from partner agencies such as Early Help or School Health. Where interventions do not improve attendance, a range of legal actions will be explored with the local authority.

6.6 Long-term Absence due to Medical Conditions

Where a student is absent from the academy due to a long-term medical condition, a care plan will be developed in accordance with the individual academy's Supporting Students with Medical Conditions policy. Where possible, the academy will support the student to continue his or her access to education by providing specialised provision or by engaging the Home/School Teaching Service. A reintegration plan will be agreed with families to enable a successful return to the academy.

Where an assessment of a student's illness or well-being concludes that their achievement will be significantly impaired unless alternative arrangements for education are made, a referral can be submitted to the Hospital School in Manchester under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996. This includes students who display Anxiety Based School Avoidance. Referrals will be made in partnership with families and will require the support of a medical professional, such as a paediatrician or Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services, in order to be accepted.

7 ABSENCE PROCEDURES

The Trust is committed to promoting the safety, health and welfare of all students and endeavours to manage absences fairly and consistently, with the aim of supporting students and their families.

Each academy in the Trust will have a clear set of procedures for families to report and address absence in a timely and accurate way. These are outlined in Appendix 3

8 CONTACT DETAILS FOR STUDENTS

To comply with Health and Safety guidelines and Keeping Children Safe in Education it is important that we have more than one up to date contact details for all students. There are a variety of reasons that staff from the academy may need to contact parents or carers, including ill health when at the academy, emergencies, to discuss unexplained absences and to ensure students are safe. To confirm the reason for a student's absence with families, the academy will generally telephone the first contact number listed on the student's record. If contact information changes, please telephone or email the academy so that contact details are correct and up to date.

9 MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

Each academy will monitor attendance to school and to all lessons closely throughout the year on a daily basis. Each academy will have a detailed set of procedures to provide support and challenge as appropriate to secure good attendance for all students. This may include utilising safeguarding procedures and working with external agencies.

An overview of those procedures against related levels of attendance is provided in Appendix 3

9.1 Children at risk of missing education

All academies will inform the local authority (LA) of any student who fails to attend regularly, or has been absent without the academy's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more. As this could be a safeguarding issue leaders will ensure that regular follow up contact is made with the LA if the whereabouts of the student are not known or communicated to the academy. If a vulnerable child cannot be contacted on the first day of absence a home visit will be completed, a non-vulnerable by the third day of absence. This will continue until the information has been secured. Leaders will follow the guidance issued by the Department for Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

9.2 Attendance Contracts

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the academy to address irregular attendance. In the past, these were known as parenting contracts. This is not legally binding but allows a more formal conversation to take place with clear outcomes and expectations where a voluntary Early Help plan has not worked or is not appropriate. An attendance contract is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to legal action. A separate leaflet is available from the academy which offers more information about attendance contracts and this will be shared with families if this process is deemed to be appropriate. It is also available on the academy's website.

9.3 Support from Early Help

Where barriers to attendance are complex, the academy will offer to work with students and families to complete an Early Help Assessment. This will enable more intensive support to be provided either at academy level or through the Early Help hub and will establish a Lead Practitioner for the family. The Lead Practitioner will be from the team or service best placed to support the family and their needs, and may be from the academy, the local authority or another partner such as a health professional.

10 ENFORCING ATTENDANCE

10.1 Parenting Orders

Parenting orders are imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or a community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance.

The order requires a parent to comply with the arrangements specified in the order by the Court which can include a requirement for parents to a parenting class. A responsible officer will be named on the order to work with the family as the lead practitioner. If parents don't comply with the order, it can be seen as an offence and a fine can be imposed the Court.

10.2 Education Supervision Orders

Where an early help plan or a parenting contract has not been successful, an application for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) can be made to provide legal intervention to improve attendance without families being prosecuted. In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the academy will consult with the local authority and they will agree that support has not been successful and that making the order would be beneficial for the student and the family. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner will agree with academy's safeguarding lead and children's social care that an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. If it is decided to apply for an ESO, a meeting will be arranged with the family to notify them and a final decision made.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the student and their family to ensure that the student receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the family's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be applied for within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

Where families persistently fail to comply with the directions given under the ESO, they may be guilty of an offence. Local authorities can prosecute in the Magistrates Court for persistent non-compliance with the Order and parents (upon conviction) will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000. The lead officer should also raise this with children's social care.

10.3 Notice to Improve Letters and Penalty Notices

After 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period each academy will make a referral to the Local Authority for statutory action. **The Local Authority may issue a School Attendance: Notice To Improve Letter.** Families would be offered a 6-week period to improve their attendance and engage with support before the LA progress to issuing a penalty notice.

A Notice to Improve Letter does not need to be issued where support is not appropriate or where parents are deliberately avoiding the above threshold being met.

Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended.

A penalty notice is a fine which can be issued to each person with parental responsibility for every school-aged child or young person with irregular attendance. **A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.**

Penalty notice fines are issued by Manchester City Council in accordance with their Penalty Notice Protocol. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28-day period may result in prosecution by the Local Authority for failure to ensure regular attendance, according to s444, Education Act 1996.

Further details of the Statutory Action Escalation Pathway can be found in Appendix 5.

Each academy will also request that the LA issue a penalty notice for taking leave of absence in term time without authorisation.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued. A template letter is provided in Appendix 4. These should be sent to families at the end of each week so that families are provided with sufficient notification of the direction of travel in relation to the balance between support and challenge.

10.4 Legal proceedings for failing to ensure regular attendance

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their family may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

Prosecution in the Magistrates Court is the last resort where all other voluntary and formal support or legal intervention has failed or where support has been deemed inappropriate. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution. Where it is decided to pursue prosecution, only local authorities can prosecute families.

Failing to ensure regular school attendance is an offence punishable in the Magistrates' Court with a fine of up to £1000 or in the case of 'aggravated' offences up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

The local authority will make the decision to prosecute but in deciding, the following will be considered:

- The level of engagement from the family and whether prosecution is needed to demonstrate how serious the absence is and to ensure parental engagement with support.
- Whether all other legal interventions have been considered and are not appropriate or have been tried and have not worked.

- Whether statutory children's social care intervention would be more appropriate including a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan.
- The family's response to formal warnings and information provided relating to the absence.

11 SUMMARY

Greater Manchester Education Trust will regularly share data and information on attendance to promote high standards amongst its academies. Equally, parents and carers have a duty to ensure that their child attends regularly. Greater Manchester Education Trust is committed to working with families and partner agencies to ensure the highest possible levels of attendance are achieved and to offer help and support to students and their families in order for them to achieve the best possible outcomes from their education.

Each academy within the trust will have guidance procedures which outline the following:

- Local procedures and graduated response to attendance support and challenge
- Scale of escalation
- Correspondence and templates
- Off-rolling procedures

The Trust and its Local Academy Committees will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Regularly review Attendance and Punctuality Policy and ensure the required resources are available to implement the policy
- Identify a member of the Trust Board to lead of attendance matters
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2013 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Agree academy attendance targets annually
- Monitor the academy's attendance through termly reporting at Local Academy Committee Meetings
- Ensure that the official attendance data is reported to external bodies as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader for attendance in each academy who is fully aware of absence procedures and ensures their implementation. The Senior Attendance Champion is also expected to set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff and have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school. It is an ongoing responsibility, and the Senior Attendance Champion is also expected to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes.
- Ensure that the academy has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are implemented procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data and to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions ensuring that there are aspirational targets for each individual pupil.

- Consider attendance information as part of wider scrutiny relating to other aspects of children's education and associated risks

Senior Leaders will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole academy approach which reinforces good attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site, are implemented
- Ensure that attendance and punctuality data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

In order to support good attendance parents and carers should:

- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the academy if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments outside of school hours
- Ask for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the academy of any change in circumstances that may impact on attendance
- Encourage routines and good preparation habits at home
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term-time

APPENDIX 1 – LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Please be aware that leave of absence for holidays taken during term time will NOT be authorised unless the academy considers there to be exceptional circumstances supporting the application. This form should be completed and submitted to the Attendance Team within four weeks of the start of the proposed leave of absence. Separate forms should be completed for each student if there is more than one request. Parents and carers are reminded that term time holidays taken without permission will result in unauthorised absence and may lead to a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority. This is a fine of £60 which rises to £120 if it is not paid within 21 days. These are issued to each parent for each child.

Name of Student:	
Form:	
Name of parent/carers:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Start date of proposed leave of absence:	
End date of proposed leave of absence:	
Exceptional circumstances:	

Signed Date

For academy use only

% Attendance	No of previous holidays	No of days authorised and dates	No of days unauthorised and dates	Reasons for decision

APPENDIX 2 – REPORTING ABSENCE

If a student is absent from the academy, families should:

- contact the academy by 8.15am on the first day of absence by telephone on 0161 446 8640 or via the school gateway app and send any supporting medical evidence to the Attendance Team if the absence is likely to continue.
- maintain contact with the academy every day of absence for safeguarding reasons, ensuring that staff are aware of the reason for absence and the likely date of return.

It is a family's responsibility to contact the academy to advise staff of absence to support the safeguarding and welfare of all students.

AM registration will take place at 08.35. Once all students are registered for the morning session, the Attendance Team will send an email to the Year Teams enquiring if any absent students have been seen in the academy. Absent students will be coded as N unless a reason for absence has been received.

If a student is not registered in the academy we will:

- Text or email families.
- Make phone calls to contact numbers on SIMS held by the academy.
- Where students are vulnerable, make home visits and contact Social Workers or Early Help support workers.
- Send letters in accordance with the stages of our policy.

Once reasons for absence have been returned, N codes in the register will be changed to the appropriate authorised code or converted to code O to indicate an unauthorised absence or that no reason has been received.

Registration is taken throughout the academy day and always within 10 minutes of the start of the lesson.

Where absence becomes a concern or no contact is possible with families, interventions will be in accordance with the various stages of our policy and will include:

- Inviting families into the academy for a meeting with Student Services.
- Notifying parents by letter when their child's attendance falls below certain parameters.
- Working closely with families and where consent is given, completing an Early Help Assessment to identify areas for support.
- Completing a parenting contract to agree actions and set targets.
- Make a referral to Manchester City Council for enforcement action.

Links to other Policies and documents:

- Supporting students with medical conditions and administration of medication
- GMET Safeguarding Policy
- [Keeping Children Safe In Education](#)
- [Working Together to Improve Attendance](#)

Transforming Attendance at Parrs Wood



APPENDIX 4 – LETTERS

Attendance Letter 1

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «forename» «surname» «reg»

Every student at Parrs Wood High School matters. The most important factor contributing to your child's success at the academy is at least 98% attendance. Whilst the academy accepts that genuine authorised absences are sometimes unavoidable, they are not without cost. The link between attendance, progress and examination results is firmly established. Those students who attend less achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. It is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school every day.

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance has begun to decline. Currently «forename»'s attendance is **«percentage_attendance»%**.

We are hoping that bringing this issue to your attention will result in an improvement but if there are any issues which you believe are affecting «his_her» attendance, please don't hesitate to contact your Year Team to discuss the help and support that we can offer.

I must remind you that ensuring regular school attendance is a legal responsibility and that failure to do so may result in a referral to the Local Authority for further action, including penalty notice fines or prosecution.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 2

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «Forename» «Surname» «reg»

Every student at Parrs Wood High School matters. The most important factor contributing to your child's success at the academy is at least 98% attendance.

It is widely recognised that absence from school significantly impacts on the educational outcomes and future life chances of children and young people. Therefore, at Parrs Wood High School, we want to encourage all our parents and carers to make sure that their children attend school every day. Regular and punctual attendance at school will ensure that your child has every opportunity for success and will also create good habits for the future.

«Forename»'s current attendance is **«percentage attendance»%** and is now a cause for concern. Due to «forename»'s current attendance levels, any future absences may not be authorised unless supported by medical evidence (for example, a doctor's note or a copy of a prescription). Absences not supported by such evidence will be unauthorised.

The Year Team will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance. If it continues to be a cause for concern the team will contact you to arrange a meeting at the academy or they will make a home visit. At this time, we will discuss how we can support you to make improvements and identify any help that you may need as a family. If, after this meeting «forename»'s attendance does not improve, then a referral may be made to the Local Authority to consider further action.

Please note that it is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice to Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from Parrs Wood High School and if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter, please make contact on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 3

Date

Parent details

Address

Dear

Following a review of this year's attendance data, I am writing to make you aware that name is currently recorded as a persistent absentee, as defined by His Majesty's Government. A student is classed as a persistent absentee when their attendance falls to 90% or below. His/her attendance is currently % and is a serious concern.

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need your support and cooperation to tackle this. In order to discuss this further, I would like to invite you to a meeting at the academy on xxxx at xxx. (Names and role) will be present at the meeting. I have enclosed a copy of xxxxx's attendance for your information.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact me to arrange a time that is suitable for you. Please also bring any medical evidence to cover xxxx's absences from school. Please note that no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence.

It is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice to Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Noice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from the academy. Please contact the attendance team if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter.

Your sincerely

Attendance Letter 4

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»,

Re: «forename» «surname» «reg»

Following a review of this year's attendance data, I am writing to make you aware that your name is currently recorded as a persistent absentee, as defined by His Majesty's Government. A student is classed as a persistent absentee when their attendance falls to 90% or below. «forename»'s attendance is currently at **«percentage attendance»%**.

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need your support to improve this. Whilst the academy accepts that genuine authorised absences are sometimes unavoidable, they are not without cost. The link between attendance, progress and examination results is firmly established. Those students who attend less achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. It is your legal responsibility to ensure that your child attends school every day.

«forename»'s attendance is now a serious cause for concern and we have to take action to ensure that this improves. This may involve home visits, inviting you to an attendance panel or making a referral to the Local Authority. Please note that no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence of illness.

It is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice to Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from the academy. Please contact your Year Team if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Letter 5

Date

Parent details

Address

Dear

Re: D.O.B.

Further to our communication earlier this academic year, I am concerned that xxxx's attendance has not significantly improved. His/her attendance is currently xxx% and he/she is recorded as a persistent absentee/severe absentee.

As the academy now has to consider the next steps to improve xxx's attendance, I would like to invite you to a meeting at the academy on (date) at (time). (staff attending and role) will be present. The purpose of the meeting is to make an offer of Early Help support. Engagement with Early Help support is entirely voluntary but is an important step in further engaging with support. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact me to arrange a time that is suitable for you. Please also bring any medical evidence to cover (student forename)'s absences from school. Please note that no absences will be authorised without medical evidence.

It is your legal responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of your child. Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice to Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Support and guidance is always available from the academy. Please contact the XXX Team if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter.

Your sincerely

Leave of absence decline

Date

Our Ref CHG

Name and address

Parental salutation

Request for Leave of Absence – Name: DOB:

Thank you for your request for **students name** to be absent from school between **dates and dates**. I have considered your request and I am writing to advise you that on this occasion, **leave of absence will not be authorised**.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 removed all references to holidays and extended leave and made it clear that headteachers should not grant any leave in term-time unless exceptional circumstances prevail, therefore, there is no automatic entitlement in law to time off school to go on holiday. The effect of this guidance is that the government expects it to be extremely unusual for holidays in term time to be permitted. On this occasion the category of exceptional circumstances has not been met.

Every student at Parrs Wood High School matters. It is critical to your child's success that they attend school as regularly as possible. Whilst the academy accepts that genuine authorised absences are sometimes unavoidable they are not without cost. The link between attendance, progress and examination results is firmly established. Those students who attend less achieve fewer qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. It is your legal responsibility to send your child to school every day.

Both the academy and the Local Authority take the issue of school attendance very seriously and parents should be aware that where holidays are taken during term time without permission they may be issued with a Penalty Notice. A first action penalty notice requires payment of £160 per student, per parent to be made within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. Penalty notices can increase to £160 per student, per parent if issued for a second authorised holiday taken in term time over a 3-year period. Where students are absent for more than 20 days, they are at risk of losing their school place.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available from the academy and if you have any specific queries in relation to this letter, please contact me to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

Name
Address

Dear

Re: Student details DOB

Every student at Parrs Wood High School matters. The most important factor contributing to your child's success at the academy is at least 98% attendance. An important step towards achieving the academy's attendance target is to ensure that (he/she) attends on time. Late arrival at the academy means:

- lost learning.
- missing important information given out in form about the day or week ahead e.g. exams.
- disrupting other students' education and lessons.
- establishing bad habits which might transfer into further education and employment.

I am writing to advise you that (student's forename)'s attendance at the academy has begun to decline and one of the reasons for this is (his/her) punctuality. (His/her) attendance percentage is now (percentage attendance)% with (number) L codes and (number) U codes recorded during this academic year.

All students are expected to be at the academy by 8.35am. Students who arrive late to Period 1 will be issued with an L mark in the register. Any student arriving after 9.05am will receive a U mark in the register which counts as an unauthorised absence. This means that 50% of the day's attendance marks have been lost.

We are hoping that bringing this issue to your attention will lead to an improvement and if there are any issues affecting (student forename)'s attendance or punctuality, please don't hesitate to contact the Attendance Team to discuss the help and support that can be offered.

As punctuality directly affects attendance reporting, I must remind you that ensuring regular school attendance is a legal responsibility and that failure to do so may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance: Notice to Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Yours sincerely

Statutory Action Escalation Pathway

**BE IN THE
RIGHT PLACE
AT THE
RIGHT TIME**



1 Support First	2 Notice to Improve	3 First Action (£80)	4 Second Action (£160)	5 Final Action
<p>Manchester adopts a 'support first' based approach.</p> <p>All families should be offered support to break down in-school and out-of-school barriers to attendance in line with Manchester's Graduated Approach.</p> <p>At Levenshulme High School this offer will include Attendance Letters, telephone calls, home visits, attendance meetings, Early Help, Parenting Contracts and other interventions as appropriate.</p> <p>If your child has been experiencing any problems that may be affecting their attendance or punctuality, then please contact the school on 0161 224 4625 to discuss the support that can be provided in partnership with you so that we can work together to improve attendance.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. Families are offered a 6-week period to improve their attendance and engage with support.</p> <p>A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued where support is not appropriate or where parents are deliberately avoiding the above threshold being met.</p> <p>Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended.</p> <p><u>Holidays:</u> Not used for unauthorised holidays taken in term time.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period.</p> <p><u>Holidays:</u> Issued for a first unauthorised holiday taken in term time.</p> <p><u>PENALTY:</u> £80 per pupil, per parent if paid within 21 days. £160 up to 28 days.</p> <p>If unpaid within 28 days, it will proceed to court.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for a second period of 10 sessions missed over a 10-week period within a 3-year rolling time frame.</p> <p><u>Holidays:</u> Issued for a second unauthorised holiday taken in term time over a 3-year period.</p> <p><u>PENALTY:</u> £160 per pupil, per parent.</p> <p>If unpaid within 28 days will proceed to court.</p>	<p>A weekly panel will meet to decide appropriate next steps for pupils who reach this stage of the escalation pathway.</p> <p>Options include: PACE Face to Face PACE by Post Direct Prosecution Section 1a Direct Prosecution Section 1a Formal Caution No Further Action</p> <p>Pupils coming into this stage of the pathway for a second or multiple times will be taken to multi-agency panels such as Early Help Allocations or Advice & Guidance</p>

Three Year Rolling Period

APPENDIX 6 – TEMPLATE SUPPORT FIRST NOTIFICATION LETTER

<Parental_Salutation>
<AddressBlock>

Support First Notification Letter – Why are you missing school? (Is your child's attendance?)

Dear <Parental_Salutation>

Re: <Name> and DOB <DOB>

<Attendance>	<M_Present_AEA>	<Codes: late before 09.05>	<Codes>	<Codes: late after 09.05. This counts as unauthorised absence>	<M_Codes>
Number of unauthorised days missed	Number days present				

Parrs Wood High School has been working hard to improve the attendance of all students. It is widely recognised that the educational outcomes and future life chances of children and young people can be significantly impacted upon by periods of absence. Therefore, we want to encourage families to ensure that their child attends school every day. Students who have irregular attendance achieve lower qualifications and are less able to access higher education, employment or training. An important step in ensuring that your child attends is to ensure that they arrive on time.

Arriving late means that your child has:

- missed out on the opportunity for breakfast,
- missing out on learning,
- missed important information given out about the day/week ahead e.g. examination dates and timetables,
- disrupted the education of other students and
- helped to establish a bad habit that might transfer into their employment history.

At Parrs Wood High School we fully appreciate that there may be occasions when a student's attendance may be affected due to exceptional circumstances or other unforeseeable events that may occur. Support and advice will always be available from the school. Unfortunately, despite this support, attendance levels for some students continues to fall below the academy's expectations of at least 98%.

All students' attendance is closely monitored by the school and in some cases, we may decide to record a student's absence as unauthorised where appropriate. This happens automatically when a student arrives after our registers have closed at 09.05. These students receive a 1/ code.

Unauthorised Sessions Missed	Unauthorised Days Missed
0	0
1	
2	1
3	
4	2
5	
6	3
7	
8	4
9	
10	5

For sessions of unauthorised absence are acceptable. Well done.

Students who attend can be supported and helped.

As a family you should have high expectations and we expect to notify you about the absence and provide all with evidence to support that absence.

Parrs Wood High School will be reaching out to you via Attendance Letters and the Missing Letter that are issued every term, as well as through text, log and home visits to ensure that you are offered any support and help that you may need to ensure your child is happy at school. Attendance meetings may be at school or in your own home. These may include an offer of Early Help or an Attendance Contract. You will also be challenged about the level of absence and the impact that this will be having on your child's progress but supported to improve this.

Your child's attendance is a cause for concern. This meeting will make progress difficult and there is a significant risk of underachievement. As a family you should be working with Parrs Wood High School to reduce absence from school. There are genuine reasons preventing your child from attending the school, we will be considering discussing the absence with Manchester City Council.

We will have requested that Manchester City Council take Statutory action. This may result in a School Attendance Notice to improve. Letter being issued by the LA and the issuing of a Penalty Notice if there is no improvement in attendance.

Families of students who have accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence are referred to Manchester LA for statutory action as part of a new National Framework for Penalty Notices laid out in Working Together To Improve Attendance (February 2024) which came into force in August 2024.

This letter outlines where you are in the escalation process that is built on support and challenge. It complements our Transforming Attendance approach.



If further unauthorised absence occurs after this warning it may result in the Local Authority issuing a School Attendance Notice To Improve Letter and a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent for each child where attendance is a concern. A 'First Action' Penalty Notice will incur a fine of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days.



Failure to pay this Penalty Notice may result in legal proceedings being taken against you in accordance with the Education Act 1996. This will involve being summoned to the Magistrates Court and if you are found guilty you will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

If your child is experiencing any problems that may be affecting their attendance or punctuality, then please contact the school on 0161 446 8640 to discuss support that can be provided. We would also urge our families to provide school with medical evidence when absence is related to illness i.e. a copy of prescriptions or medical/appointment cards.

Yours sincerely

Mr J McIlroy
Assistant Headteacher: Attendance & Transition
Senior Attendance Champion



APPENDIX 7 – ATTENDANCE CODING

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
Attending at a place other than at school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registration	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – approved leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made

Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: - In police detention - Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or - Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes (must be cleared at least weekly)
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays