Attendance Policy

Myton School

Approved by:	FGB	Date: 9 December 2024
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Version	2	

Contents

1. **Policy statement**

Statement of Intent

At Myton, our vision is to equip students for lifelong success. We do this through our core principles of:

- Removing barriers
- Investing in futures
- Working together
- Developing self-assured learners

We guide students to CARE, so all students can achieve lifelong success by being:

- Community Minded: always thinking of others
- Aspirational: having high standards for themselves, their futures, and for those around them
- Respectful: of themselves, their peers and their community
- Engaged: in their learning and the world around them

Myton School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students and recognises this is best achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all, especially our disadvantaged students and those with SEND. Myton School understands that if students feel safe, and if they are succeeding both academically and socially then they are likely to attend school regularly and therefore will thrive educationally; with high attainment being linked to high attendance. It is the policy of our school to celebrate both attendance and attainment. When students do not attend school regularly, Myton works hard to identify the reasons why and will implement a personalised plan to ensure students are supported to learn to their maximum potential. This might include careers guidance to support and encourage a sense of purpose and direction, providing the motivation to attend.

All staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. Myton recognises that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems. We will provide effective and efficient communications with students, parents, and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support to meet our objectives.

This policy is based on current government guidance, 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024' and Statutory Regulations.

Objectives:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, students and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify students or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

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2. Definitions

In this policy there are some key definitions which will be used, we have referenced the meaning of these terms below for ease of understanding:

Persistent Absence - Where a student's attendance figure reaches 90% or below, they are deemed as 'persistently absent' from school.

Severe Absence - Where a student is absent from school more than they are present, therefore with an attendance figure of 50% or below, they are deemed as 'severely absent'.

Parents - For the purpose of this policy a parent means: all natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person and any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

Vulnerable students - For the purpose of this policy vulnerable students are those who:

Have a social worker or previously had a social worker;

Is a Child looked after;

Are Children with an educational health care plan;

Are Children who are severely absent (their attendance in school is 50% or below).

3. Statutory/Legal Guidance

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school[1].

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations.

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[1] The education Act 1996, part 1, section 7. Additional legal requirements may be found in *The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006*.

4. Key Staff and Contacts

School-based contacts

Role	Contact Details
Headteacher	Andy Perry
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Carolyn Haines
Attendance Senior Leader	Mark Aynsley
Attendance Manager	Aimee Durden
School Absence reporting line	01926 493805
Nominated Attendance link Governor	Mike Oldridge
All of the above can be contacted via the School office on 01926 493805	

Other useful contacts

Agency / Contact	Contact Details
Warwickshire Attendance Service	01926 476600
Access to Education team	01926 736323
Children's Social Care – Integrated Front Door Warwickshire County Council	01926 414144

5. <u>Safeguarding</u>

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of safeguarding. Absence can be an indicator of abuse and neglect and may also raise concerns about other safeguarding issues, including the criminal exploitation of children.

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when students are not at school. This means we need to have a least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if their numbers change.

Myton School recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as unauthorised absence as it will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm.

Myton School will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school and evidence of absences may be requested, such as medical evidence.

5.1 Children missing education

In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education Leaders have ensured that:

1. Staff understand what to do when children do not attend regularly.
2. Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for students who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions) are in place.
3. Staff know that travelling to conflict zones could be an indicator of FGM and forced marriage.
4. Procedures are in place to ensure that we always inform the local authority when we plan to take students off-roll or when they:
   a. leave the school to be home educated
   b. move away from the school location
   c. remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
   d. are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or are permanently excluded

We will ensure that students who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When a student leaves, we will record the name of the student's new school and their expected start date.

Staff will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the Local Authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff will be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

5.2 Vulnerable Students

Myton School routinely monitors the attendance of vulnerable students. If we have concerns about students, we work closely with outside agencies to ensure parents understand the importance of good attendance and attendance procedures. There are a number of ways we may monitor the attendance of vulnerable students in addition to the universal daily process of monitoring attendance for all:

a. Watch List - Vulnerable students are included on the school internal 'Watch List', the attendance of these students is monitored on a lesson-by-lesson basis and absences are reported to the appropriate staff member immediately and contact is made with parents/carers as needed.

b. Daily school contact from the attendance team to parents/carers (and any external professionals such as social workers) for absences of vulnerable students or those at risk of persistent or severe absence.

c. Warwickshire Flexible Learning Team – Heads of Year are in regular communication with the flexible learning team to ensure Ill Health students are engaged and progressing. The attendance of these students is captured daily.

d. Dual Registration – Myton School maintains its responsibility to ensure that students who are dual registered are attending each day and progressing with their education.

e. SEND – Students who have special education needs or disabilities who are poor attenders are monitored through the internal referral and monitoring panel (alignment meetings). At regular meetings, attendance is discussed and tracked and interventions are put into place by senior leaders.

f. Severely Absent Students - Students who are severely absent are assigned an attendance case manager who makes regular contact with the child and family to support them in removing the barriers to attendance and engage them back into school. All contact and agreed interventions are robustly recorded and the impact is monitored regularly.

6. Leadership and Management

The role of the Head teacher/Governors
- Ensure the attendance policy is implemented and regularly updated.
- Keeping attendance high profile and embedding understanding of the link between attendance and outcomes.

Role of the Senior Attendance Team
- Advise on and implement whole school strategies for improving attendance.
- Ensure relevant procedures are followed for staff not meeting their statutory safeguarding requirements related to recording attendance.
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.
- Hold regular meetings with the DSL and Local Authority support services such as Warwickshire Admission Service (WAS) and Early help.
- Hold regular meetings with Year team (Link) to ensure every child's attendance is 96% or above.
- Meet and support Year teams (alignment) to discuss strategies for pupils below 96% to prevent persistent absenteeism.
- Identify attendance target groups.
- Monitor whole school attendance rewards and initiatives.

- Ensure that all relevant staff are fully trained in procedures that relate to attendance.
- Liaise with SENCo and DSL to identify students who would benefit from a referral to WAS.

Role of Head of Year:
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.
- Ensure early intervention is in place to support students and families.
- Ensure attendance plans are in place for those at stage 3 or below and recorded on provision map.
- Communicate with the attendance lead on pastoral interventions for stage 1 and 2 students.
- Meet with Pastoral Leader (link) on a fortnightly basis to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitor year group attendance and support with strategies to improve poor attendance and celebrate good/improved attendance.
- Regularly meet with the Senior Leader responsible for attendance (links) to identify key pupils who would benefit from further strategies being implemented.
- Commission support via alignment meetings to remove barriers to good attendance for individual students.
- Monitor attendance for every child in their Year group using the trackers.
- At the end of every day ensure all registers are up to date, accurate and there are no N codes.
- Promote excellent attendance via tutor time and through a reward system.
- Meet with parents/carers if there are attendance concerns.
- Ensure students complete sanctions for lateness and reward students who have excellent attendance and whose attendance is improving.

Role of Pastoral Leaders
- Daily period 1 checks on:
- Form truancy but present lesson 1 changed to late
- Red list (not on CIN/CP)
- Vulnerable students
- PP students
- Carry out daily lesson checks communicating with the pastoral admin for support with checking on non attendance to lessons.
- Work with form tutors and head of year to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern: all unexplained absences to be followed up.
- Work with the attendance admin lead to ensure there is two-way communication between parents/carers for all students with absence for more than two days.
- Make home contact for students with unexplained absence of more than three days, explained absence 5 days (medical evidence requested). Safe and Well check by 10 days even if other external agencies have already done so and logged on cpoms.
- Ensure that all registers are up to date and there are no N codes.
- Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns and consider appropriate levels of support required.
- Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents and Head of Year.
- Promote good school attendance by setting targets and reward 'good/improved attendance' certificates as appropriate.
- Ensure that students who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integration back into school upon their return.
- Ensure that Early Help referrals are opened as necessary to support children in attending school regularly and on time.

- Ensure pupils who are consistently late receive communication home about concerns and conduct meetings if no improvement.
- Have learning conversations with pupils who are struggling with attendance and punctuality issues.
- Liaise with the Designated Person for Child Protection as necessary.
- Identify any patterns of absence to HoY and to the Senior Lead for attendance.

Role of the School Attendance Admin Leader
- Work with staff to ensure all staff meet their statutory safeguarding requirements related to recording attendance.
- Check user defined groups for absent PL's lesson 1.
- Monitor lesson 1 lateness and ensure appropriate form time mark.
- Attend regular attendance team meetings.
- Record all reasons for absence as reported by parents on a daily basis.
- Contact all students with N marks by day 2 of absence.
- Log on cpoms any concerns around unexplained absence.
- Check form registers are accurate so the fire register is produced each day.
- Produce a fire register on a daily basis and forward to Head of Year.
- Send daily text messages for all students absent and record reasons provided as a result.
- Keep track of pastoral interventions communicated by pastoral team.
- Co-ordinate all letters home as per the staged approach.
- Meet with the attendance team on a regular basis.
- Liaise with the Head's PA to ensure P5 registers are complete.
- Input paper registers provided by external supply.
- Support with referrals where necessary to support children with poor attendance.
- Daily checks for CP and CIN students, concerns logged on cpoms and social worker informed (ADU/CDU).
- Support with CIN/CP Safe and Well checks after 3 days of unexplained absence and before 10 days if explained (CDU).
- Ensure all external agencies are notified where relevant on day 1 of absence (CDU).
- Feedback concerns around policies and procedures via the team meeting.
- Ensure CME referrals are made for student that do not attend school regularly and not at their address.
- Support with making contact with all students absent without reason for two days or more.
- Carry out a monthly official register check.
- Use SIMS to flag incomplete registers with staff. Record non completion of registers bring to fortnightly meeting.

Role of the Form Tutor/class teacher
- As the first point of contact with students, tutors are crucial in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Tutors/class teachers to ensure registers are completed within the first 10 minutes.
- Identify any patterns in a student's attendance/punctuality, discuss all absences with students.
- Attendance figures discussed with tutor group on a weekly basis and the impact of absences on learning and progress.
- Support the Pastoral team with attendance report cards linked to weekly rewards.
- All lateness to be monitored and discussed with individual students.
- Report to the Pastoral Leader all students whose attendance/punctuality is raising cause for concern.
- Tutor to share pupils' attendance with tutees regularly.

Role of the Parent/Carer

Section 444(1) of the EDUCATION ACT 1996 states that 'IF a child of compulsory school age who is registered student at a school fails to attend school regularly at the school the parent is guilty of an offence'.

• Parent/person with parental responsibility has a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends the school regularly and on time.

• Parents should support the school by avoiding, if possible, non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school time.

• Parents DO NOT have an automatic right to take their child out of the school for a holiday or any other period of extended leave during term time

• Contact the school on the first day of absence and if possible indicate day of return.

• Only the school within the context of the law can authorise absence this does not oblige the school to accept the reason for the absence.

• All unexplained absences will be investigated and parents will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.

• Attend meetings about their child's attendance; support the school in responding to concerns regarding attendance and work with the relevant Year team to help improve their child's attendance/punctuality.

• Parents who fail to fulfil their responsibility can expect legal action: this may include a Notice to Improve or a Penalty Notice.

Role of Students

• All students are expected to be on the school site by 8.35am appropriately prepared for the day.

• At 8.40am students should be in their registration room.

• Students who arrive after 8.40am must sign in at reception: their time of arrival at school will be recorded by the inventory system.

• All students late without a valid reason will attend a same day break time detention.

• Students are expected to remain in school all day and will not be allowed to leave the school site without permission.

• Poor punctuality is not acceptable: students who consistently arrive late for the school day disrupt learning and miss out on valuable teaching time.

• Truancy from the school is taken very seriously and parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity. Students who truant from lessons will be expected to make up the time they have missed

Role of the Local Authority

• To meet regularly with LT leading on attendance to examine the effectiveness of attendance interventions.

• To communicate regularly with the Pastoral Leaders to ensure Early Help Referrals and other interventions are in place.

• To support with home visits when required.

• To work with the school and families to create family support plans as necessary.

• To support the school in ensuring legal cases are taken forward as necessary.

7. Day to Day Attendance Procedures

7.1 Registers

Registers are taken each AM and PM session and within the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Non-attendance is identified each morning and afternoon as well as within every lesson.

In the morning if the child has not arrived in school and we have not been informed of a

reason the following actions will be taken;

- A text message will be sent to the parent/carers if no appropriate response is received.
- A telephone call will be made on the second day of unexplained absence if no appropriate response is received.
- Home contact will be completed on the 3rd day of the unexplained absence.

The DSL notifies Children's Social Care if a child with a child protection plan is absent for more than two consecutive days without explanation.

7.2   Absence and Punctuality

Parents are required to contact the school as soon as possible to inform us if a child is to be absent or late on **EACH** day that the child is eligible to attend.

This can be done via;

1. **Telephone:** 01926 493805 **– press (1) for attendance**
2. **Text:** 07418-342163
3. **Email: attendance@myton.co.uk**

Students are late if they are not in their tutor room by 8.40am and will be L coded. However, arrival after 9:10am will result in an Unauthorised Late code (U).

The attendance team and tutors will monitor lateness and punctuality. Sanctions and parental contact will be used as appropriate.

Where parents are phoning in daily to report student absence the school will follow an 'Explained absence process'. An explanation from a student's parent does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

If a student is absent from school for more than 5 consecutive days, on the 6th day the absence be unauthorised, medical evidence may be requested and the school will make contact with the parent to discuss further. An explained absence that reaches a 6th consecutive day without medical evidence may then result in a home visit so that the school safeguarding team and the attendance team can speak to both the child and the parent and support can be put in place as needed.

7.3   Authorisation of Absence

We are advised by government legislation and Local Authority guidance that attendance can only be authorised if the following applies:

- Medical reasons - please note medical evidence and/or a parental written note will be asked for upon return to school for students whose attendance falls below the schools expected threshold (95%)**.** Medical evidence may be required on the 6th day if a student has five consecutive days absence from school due to illness or the student's attendance is below 90%.
- Religious celebration observation.
- If transport provided by the school/Local Authority cannot bring the child to school.

Absences may also be authorised for the following reasons, but this will be at the discretion of the attendance team and the Head Teacher:

- Where a Leave of Absence has been completed by parent/carer and is agreed by the Head Teacher.
- Where a student has a medical appointment that cannot be changed e.g. a consultant appointment.
- When the student has no fixed abode, their parent is engaged in a trade which requires them to travel, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and the student has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months.
- Other exceptional circumstances e.g. family bereavement and for a limited period.

7.4   Medical Appointments

Where possible, appointments should be made out of school hours or in school holidays. However, we realise this is sometimes not possible. Students should come into school before and after appointments to ensure they miss as little lesson time as possible. Students should sign out and in at Student Support before leaving/upon their return to school.

8. Leave of Absence During Term Time

Arranging holidays during term time causes issues for many reasons:

- the student's education suffers;
- lessons and extra-curricular activities are missed;
- there is often no opportunity for teachers to set additional work or to assist a child in catching up on their return from holiday; and
- Parents may be in breach of their legal obligation to send their child to school.

➤ The Head teacher **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.

➤ Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

➤ The Head Teacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

➤ The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent, i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.

➤ Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

➤ Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

➤ Matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence may be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.

➤ The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices and legal proceedings for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of

Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance).

➢ If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case-by- case basis and on its own merits.

9. <u>Attendance Intervention</u>

Intervention will follow a staged approach and students will be monitored at regular intervals. Different strategies will be used depending on the stage they are at in the process and their personal situation. Myton School tracks attendance data forensically and uses this data to regularly decide upon the strategies which are outlined in detail in the Myton Staged Approach (Appendix 1).

Early intervention will be sought so students can be supported meeting their attendance targets. The nature of student absence is crucial when applying this approach and individual circumstances will be considered.

9.1   Attendance Incentives

Myton School promotes and incentivises good attendance on a continual cycle throughout the school year as we know it is vital to celebrate attendance on a regular basis. Examples of the way Myton School promotes good attendance includes:

- Messages to parents and students on the school website
- Praise postcards sent home for improved attendance
- Assemblies celebrating individual, tutor or year group attendance
- End of year reward for students with good attendance
- Letters to students with good attendance
- Prizes given to individuals and, tutor groups based on attendance. This is not based solely on the highest attendance, but may include the most improved attendance over a set period of time.
- Reward afternoons such as 'pizza party' or 'film afternoon'
- Stickers, stamps, postcards or other forms of recognition for excellent or improved attendance.

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Appendix 1 - Myton Staged Approach

CARE

Stage 0 letter
4 weeks into the academic year
Letter highlighting importance of attendance and report

Attendance review each half term and letters issued

96% attendance and above
Half termly well-done letter, half termly reward draw.

Stage 1 - Attendance falls below 96% attendance
Pastoral intervention, School Letter 1

N codes
N code letter sent. N codes changed to N or O if no response in 2 weeks

Illness
Medical letter sent if medical patterns and no reasons given

Late to school 1 and 2
5 or more lates per half term = Late letter

No improvement
Pastoral parent meeting

Stage 2 - Attendance continues to fall (90% below PA)
Pastoral support, School Letter 2

Stage 3 - Attendance continues to fall (80% below)
Attendance plan, Pastoral meeting, School Letter 3

Attendance continues to fall (60% below. 50% = SA)
Local Authority support

CIN/CP

Yes
Warning letter 1. HV with Lead Professional. 3 week review period

No
Warning letter 1. 3 week review period. Parent Meeting. Early help

No improvement
Home visit, Panel meeting, warning letter 2

No improvement
Penalty Notice

No improvement
Final warning letter. Statutory Intervention Form

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