



# Attendance Policy

February 2022

Signed:

Headteacher

<b>Date of Policy</b>	February 2022
<b>SLT Lead</b>	Assistant Head – Pastoral
<b>Date of next review</b>	February 2023

## **Contents**

1. Aims
  2. Rationale
  3. Legislation and Guidance
  4. School procedures
  5. Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absences
  6. Child Missing Education
  7. Procedure for Reporting Absence
  8. Links with other policies
- Appendix 1: attendance codes
- Appendix 2: Attendance Codes Related to Coronavirus

## **SCHOOL ETHOS AND VALUES**

Our Christian values are at the heart of the ethos of the school and through these we grow individually and as a community. The Story of the Good Samaritan underpins our 7 core values of:

- Honesty
- Forgiveness
- Empathy
- Courage
- Resilience
- Kindness
- Respect

These core values underpin our policies, procedures and the way we treat one another in our community.

## **COVID-19**

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on apply as set out in this policy. The school will adapt this policy and record keeping in line with any changes in Government Policy that arise connected to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is recognised that Covid-19 will impact on attendance for individual students and the whole school's attendance figures in the academic year 2021-22. The aims set out below remain the same although when analysing attendance figures consideration will be given to the impact on levels of attendance e.g., from self-isolation resulting from the pandemic.

### **1. Aims**

Sexey's School aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Maximising attendance rates to achieve an overall attendance level above 97%
- Reducing the number students persistently absent (less than 90% attendance)
- Acquainting parents/carers with their responsibility for ensuring regular attendance and consistency between school and home expectations of behaviour.
- Establishing the culture that unjustified absence and poor behaviour are not tolerated.
- Developing self-discipline raising individual standards in attendance.
- Supporting pupils through additional provision attendance issues are hindering inclusion.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their

children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents/carers as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

## **2. Rationale**

At Sexey's we believe that good attendance is a crucial part of ensuring that students can achieve their potential and develop strong 'work-ready' habits, in preparation for life after school. We fully support Somerset LEAs Schools Attendance Policy. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is legitimate. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer.

***Our definition of 'Good Attendance' is 95% or above.***

All children may sometimes be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Attendance is recorded in sessions, with 2 sessions a day.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school with good reason such as illness or other legitimate cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- **Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily**
- **Truancy before or during the school day**
- **Absences which have never been properly explained**
- **Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark**
- **Holidays in term time for which leave of absence has not been granted**

A full list of attendance codes can be found in Appendix 1.

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This may involve further help by referral to other professionals or outside agencies. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Safeguarding Service (ESS) for the Education Safeguarding Officer (ESO). The ESO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways

of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, this Officer can use court proceedings to prosecute parents/carers or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and / or 3 months imprisonment, the court could also give a community order.

Further guidance on attendance can be found in the school's [Attendance Leaflet](#) on our website.

### **3. Legislation and guidance**

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 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 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [School Census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### **4. School procedures**

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Attendance Registers are required by law to be called twice a day, once at the commencement of the morning session and once at the commencement of the afternoon session.
- Registers close 10 minutes after the start of the morning (and afternoon sessions).
- Procedures for the marking of registers and associated administration along with the agreed rewards and sanctions are published and shared with staff.
- The Attendance Officer monitors attendance records and makes appropriate referrals.
- The school Attendance Officer will contact parents/carers via SchoolComms (Text), ClassCharts Messaging phone call or e-mail when a student is absent, and the school has not been informed.
- Parents/carers must provide a reasonable explanation for all absences, or they will be coded as unauthorised.
- The school monitors attendance and rewards individual and group achievements in this area.
- Fortnightly meetings are held by the Pastoral Team to review and discuss attendance concerns the actions to be taken. This will always include students

whose attendance is below 90% or those with 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12 week.

- Holiday during school time will not be granted unless it is due to exceptional circumstances. The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

### **i) Truancy**

Teachers are required to maintain electronic registers and use SIMS data to check absences. If a child truant from a single lesson, students will be expected to spend at least the equivalent time of the time missed in detention. The sanction for truancy for a whole day will be internal isolation.

If a child does not arrive at school and a parent/carer does not call in on their behalf, a text message will be sent using SchoolComms using the contact numbers held on SIMS or ClassCharts Messaging. If a parent/carer responds to this message stating that the child left for school, but has not arrived, it is the parent's/carer's responsibility to contact the police. However, the school will support initial investigations as necessary (for example speaking to any student in school about student's whereabouts).

If a young person is found to be absent from a lesson, the class teacher should alert all staff. A thorough search of site will be made for the young person. If the child is not found on school site, it will be established by the Attendance Officer when the student was last seen.

In the event of a student truanting school the following procedure will take place:

- Parents/carers will be contacted by the Attendance Officer.
- Student to be returned to school as soon as possible.
- Meeting with a member of the Pastoral Team and parent/carer to be arranged.
- An SLT detention will be set if a single lesson is missed. In the event that a student truant 2 or more lessons they will be placed in isolation for a day.
- If a student does not return to school or return home by the end of the day. Parents/carers will need to contact the police

### **ii) Holidays during term time**

- Sexey's School follows the DFE and Local Authority guidelines with reference to holidays during term time.

The guidance issued in 2013 set out that holidays during school time can no longer be authorised by schools; unless there are exceptional circumstances. Sexey's School will therefore not authorise any absence during term time unless the application meets the exceptional circumstances criteria set out below:-

- One or more parents is a member of the armed forces and has been or is due to be deployed overseas within the last or next 6 months and evidence can be provided to support this.
- One or more parents is a member of the police, fire or medical NHS staff who has restricted leave due to their job and evidence can be provided to support this.
- Death of a parent, grandparent, step parent, sibling, or step sibling who is living overseas and whose funeral will be overseas.
- Terminal illness of immediate family member (this includes parent, step-parent and siblings who have less than 3 months anticipated left to live).

If an unauthorised absence holiday is taken during term time the school is able to action the following once 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days have occurred).

- Refer the family to the Education Safeguarding Officer (ESO) with the Education Safeguarding Service (ESS) .
- Request a penalty notice is served on the parents.

## **5. Warning Penalty Notices and Penalty Notices**

Information on penalty notices can be found in the school's [Penalty Procedure Leaflet](#)

Warning Penalty Notices may be issued for:

- 14 unexplained / unauthorised absences
- No improvement in attendance seen
- Meeting has been offered but unsuccessful or where there has been no engagement from the parent/carer

Penalty Notices may be issued for:

- Unauthorised holiday
- Failure to engage with support offered
- Failure to achieve attendance contract targets
- Other significant attendance concerns
- Persistent unauthorised absence

## **6 Child Missing in Education**

If a young person leaves Sexey's School to join another school or receive home education the parents/carers must inform the school in writing.

If a student leaves during the course of the academic year and staff are not informed of their next school or, if Sexey's School is unable to establish that the young person

has started, the child will remain on roll at Sexey's until it is established where he/she is receiving education and a Child Missing Education Referral will be completed and submitted to the Education Safeguarding Service

Once a new school placement has been confirmed and the student has started, a CTF (Common Transfer File) will be sent electronically, and paper files will be sent via recorded delivery to the new school. The child will remain on school roll until the Local Authority notifies otherwise.

## **7. Procedure for Reporting Absence**

Parents/Carers should report unplanned absences before 8:40 am as follows:

- Using ClassCharts App – via the Absences Tab. This method is the most efficient as it allows parents to attach supporting evidence and the Absence Officer to readily acknowledge receipt.
- Telephone 01749 813393 and press number 1 for attendance to report their son/daughter absent from School. Leave their son/daughter's name, their tutor group, and a brief description of why they are absent.
- As part of our Safeguarding Procedures parents/carers reporting periods of absence via voicemail/phone may receive a call from the Attendance Officer to confirm the identity of the caller. Parents/Carers may also be asked to follow up in their call, in writing either by an email or a letter from a parent/carer on their child's return.
- It is vital that parents/carers notify the School each day their child is unwell.
- Absences will be marked as unauthorised until the Attendance Officer is satisfied that parents/carers have provided a valid explanation or evidence to authorise the absence.
- Medical absences: For medical absences over five days, the school requires medical evidence to continue to authorise the absence this can take the form of for example a copy of a prescription, doctor's appointment, or consultant's letter.
- For planned absences from school or lessons, such as dental/medical appointments or other legitimate reasons, parents/carers should provide an appointment card from the dentist/hospital etc. If a note or a card is not produced, then the absence will not be authorised.
- All absences will be marked as unauthorised if no communication from parents/carers has been received.
- The School is required to inform the Local Authority if a student fails to attend school for 10 sessions in any 12-week period (for lower school only).
- To request permission for a child to be absent for any other reason than illness or medical the term-time leave form (available on the school's website) should be completed.

## **8. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- Child Missing Education Policy

## **9. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually unless the Government Policy or COVID 19 requires an earlier review.

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Physical Meaning</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
B	Education off site (no Dual reg)	Approval Education Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised Abs	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity	In for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend/No mark recorded	No mark	Out for whole session

## Appendix 2

### **Recording non-attendance related to coronavirus (COVID-19) from September 2021**

The Department for Education has defined a set of sub codes for schools to use to consistently record nonattendance related to COVID-19 and help them to complete the educational settings status form.

**Set of sub-codes :**The set of sub codes to record non-attendance related to COVID-19 are:

**Code X01:** Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school. This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

**Code X02:** Pupil self-isolating with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because they have symptoms of COVID19 but they have not yet had a positive test.

**Code X03:** Not applicable for this academic year

**Code X04:** Not applicable for this academic year

**Code X05:** Pupil required to self-isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory). This code is used for pupils who are required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK. Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) see red list rules.

**Code X06:** Pupil who is clinically extremely vulnerable if shielding is advised. Clinically extremely vulnerable people are no longer advised to shield. However, this code is used if shielding is advised nationally or in a local area by DHSC, Public Health England (PHE) or UK Health Security Agency. In this scenario, pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable may be advised not to attend school. See DHSC / PHE Guidance on protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

**Code X07:** Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in government advice. This code is for pupils who as part of local or national restrictions to education settings are specifically advised not to attend school for public health reasons related to COVID-19.

**Code X08:** Pupil not attending school in line with advice from Directors of Public Health as part of outbreak management. This code is for pupils who are advised not attend school, for public health reasons, as part of formal contingency planning (sometimes called outbreak management) advice related to COVID-19. This code can only be used to record restricted attendance where this has been advised by the relevant public health authority.

**Code X09:** Pupil or student required to self-isolate as a close contact of a confirmed case. This code is for pupils or students who are advised to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they are not fully vaccinated and are over the age of 18 years and 6 months. There is no requirement for children or young people under the age of 18 years and 6 months, regardless of their vaccine status, to self-isolate whilst awaiting the results of their PCR test where they have been a close contact.

**Code I01:** Illness

This code is used for pupils who are absent because of non-COVID-19 related illness or sickness.

**Code I02:** Illness confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) This code is used for pupils who are absent because they have tested positive for COVID19.

Where schools are using these sub-codes they will still need to consider on an individual basis whether Code X is the appropriate code for a given non-attendance. They will need to ensure that Code X is only used where a pupil does not attend school because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from either Public Health England (PHE), the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 Where a pupil's non-attendance does not meet these requirements it should not be recorded as Code X and schools should consider whether another code can be used.