



SHOREHAM ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 2023

Review July 2024

Introduction

Aims and Expectations.

Unless authorised by school, all students are expected to attend 100% of the time. This will be rewarded in line with the school's reward systems.

Students need a high level of attendance to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and Shoreham Academy places a high priority on achieving excellent levels of attendance; we believe that regular attendance at school is vital for students to succeed and fulfil their potential, gaining the greatest from their education.

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to be proud to belong and to achieve their best. It is vital that students attend regularly and should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important that parents/carers ensure their children attend regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Promoting regular attendance.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, students, and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

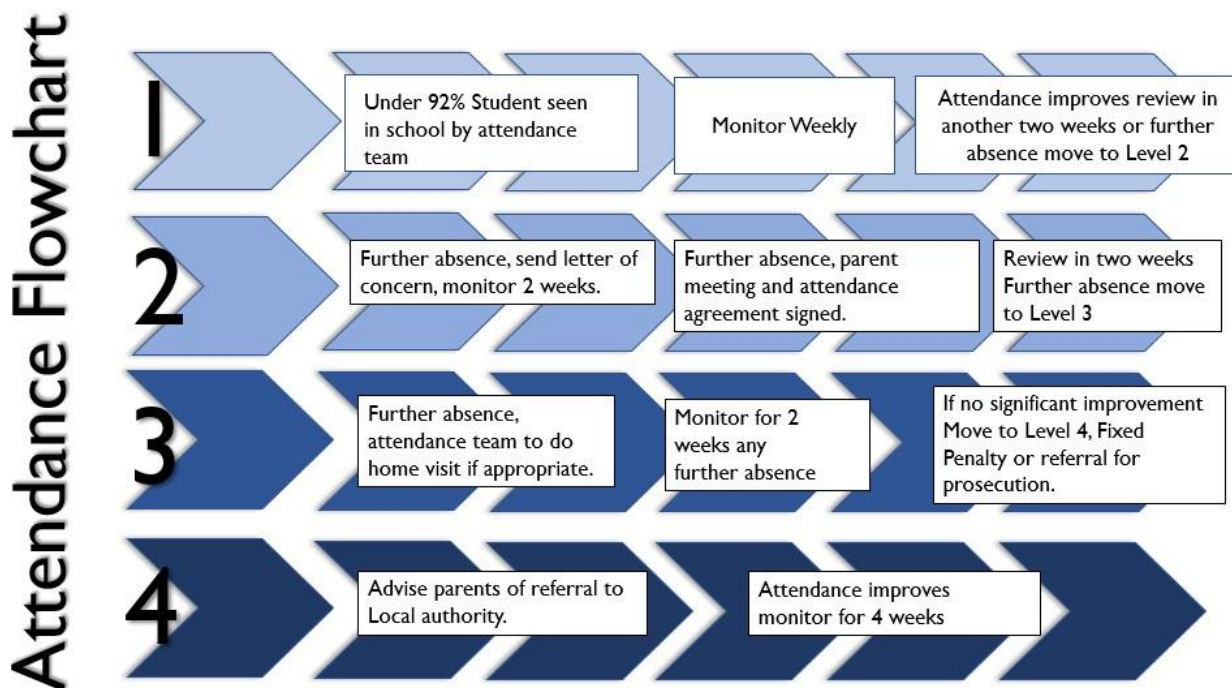
- Provide details on attendance in our regular school newsletter.
- Report to you termly on how your child is performing in school and their attendance.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying mentor group and school achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance through a variety of rewards.
- Give parents access to live data on their child's attendance percentage on Arbor.

Using Data to support excellent attendance.

Shoreham Academy's target for individual and whole school attendance is 95%+. This would represent up to 6 days absent in one academic year. When attendance drops below 95% this becomes a cause for concern.

Persistent Absence – A student will be considered as persistently absent when attendance drops below 90%. This means the student would miss the equivalent of 19 school days per academic year. At this point there is a serious risk of underachievement.

Shoreham Academy aims to support parents and carers by reviewing attendance daily, weekly and half termly. If a student's attendance drops below 92% then the flow chart below is put in place to help increase their attendance before falling below 90%.



Monitoring and Supporting Excellent Attendance through Data.

Attendance Percentage	Description of attendance levels	Support Provided by School
95 -100% 95% = 6 days of absence 95% = 36 lessons missed	Excellent attendance. Best chance of success	Positive encouragement and use of regular rewards to maintain high attendance. Weekly attendance reward in mentor time (100%). Attendance recognition certificate to be sent to the student. 100% attendance = entry into attendance 100 club prize draw at the end of the year.
92 – 95% 92% = 12 days of absence 92% = 72 lessons missed	A cause for concern. At some risk of underachievement.	Monitoring weekly by the attendance team, patterns of attendance and reasons for absence. Attendance letter 1 (below 95%) will be sent home warning parents/carers of concern.
90-92% 90% = 19 days of absence 90% = 114 lessons missed	Significant concern. At high risk of underachievement.	Attendance agreement to be signed at a further parent meeting. Attendance monitored daily with follow up calls for any absence. Follow up meetings to take place 2 weeks after the agreement meeting with the Education Welfare officer, Director of Learning and/or Director of PP.
Below 90% Student is identified as 'persistently absent'. 85% = 29 days of absence. 85% = 171 lessons missed	Persistent absence – failing to improve	Attendance monitored daily and calls made to parents/carers daily. Direct link to Education Welfare officer and referral to our Local authority. Safeguarding/Welfare home visits to take place.

Responsibilities of parents and carers.

As a parent or carer, it is your responsibility to ensure the following.

- Your child attends school every day and you are aware of your legal responsibilities under the Education Act 1996 that a child of compulsory school age must attend full time education suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and special education needs.
- Your child arrives punctually, in full school uniform (see Uniform Policy) and prepared for the school day.
- You contact school on the first day of absence and every subsequent day before 8.30am.
- You arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- You provide medical evidence by way of appointment cards or medical letters.
- You attend meetings if requested, with regards to attendance or lateness.
- You notify the school of any changes to contact details.

Tailored Support for Parents and Carers to achieve excellent attendance.

We recognise that tackling and ensuring excellent attendance can be challenging and as a school we will listen to, understand, empathise, and support parents/carers, but poor attendance cannot be tolerated as it will impact the child's power to change their life.

We will support parents/carers to ensure their child has excellent attendance through the following:

- Daily access to our School Information System Arbor via Portal to track attendance of your child.
- Weekly reward points for 100% attendance per mentor group.
- Fortnightly attendance monitoring with the child and their mentor to identify any patterns of concern or to praise for excellent attendance.
- Termly certificates will be given to all those above 95% attendance.
- Phone conversations to understand reasons for absence and support from School teams upon the return to school.
- Home visits to support attendance.
- In person meetings to discuss barriers to attendance and how collectively these can be overcome to support improvement.
- Drawing up individual attendance recovery plans unique to the circumstances of the family that all will be fully committed to ensure attendance is the priority.
- Monitoring and supporting the progress made towards attendance targets.

Punctuality / Lateness.

All students should arrive by 8.20am ready in class for Mentor time.

Registration is taken at 8.30am, anyone arriving after 8.30am should sign in at Student Services. Students who arrive after 8.25 am and before 9am will receive a 15-minute after school detention. Students arriving after 9am will receive a one-hour SLT detention on a designated day. Registers are closed at 9am in accordance with the Local Authority guidelines and students arriving after this time will be allocated an

unauthorised late mark which legally represents an absence. 10 unauthorised absences in a period of 10 weeks may lead to the Local Authority issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60, rising to £120 if not paid in 21 days.

If your child fails to register and we have not received any notification, an automated text message will be sent to your registered mobile. (See Children Missing in Education Policy). If a student is absent without prior authorisation and no explanation is provided, the absence will automatically be recorded as unauthorised.

We will work closely with parents/carers to improve and support students. When improvements are not sustained and students continue to be persistently late, they will be referred to the Local Authority and the parent/carer may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Authorised Absence.

There are certain circumstances where a student's absence may be authorised by the principal or other designated member of staff:

- a) Sickness covered by medical evidence.
- b) If West Sussex County Council, the Local Authority, do not provide transport to which a student is entitled.
- c) Authorisation to take part in a day of religious observance.
- d) Exceptional leave of absence or for other educational or sporting activities to be considered individually by the principal.

Absence due to Illness/Medical appointments.

On every morning of a student's absence, parents should contact the school on the automated 24-hour Absence Line **01273 274100**. Please leave a clear message, giving your child's name, mentor group and reason for absence. Any absence that is unexplained will be recorded as unauthorised. Alternatively, parents/carers can email attendance@shoreham-academy.org.

If your child needs to attend a medical appointment during school hours, an appointment letter must be sent in advance if a child needs to sign out from school.

Leave of absence during term time.

The Department of Education, in 2013 (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006, states that a principal may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Leave of absence will not be granted unless:

- (i) an application has been made in advance to the principal by a parent with whom the student normally resides,

- (ii) the principal considers whether the leave of absence should be granted due to '**exceptional circumstances**' relating to that application.
- (iii) every application will be considered individually. Any leave of absence of **5 days or more** taken during term time will likely lead to parents being subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

Legal Guidelines.

Every child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school must attend the school regularly.

It is an offence under the 1996 Education Act if a child of compulsory school age fails to regularly attend the school where they are registered, and parents are at risk of prosecution under the 1996 Act (Section 444) unless those absences are authorised. As an alternative to prosecution in a Magistrate Court, parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice issued by the Local Authority.

In the case of excluded students on roll at Shoreham Academy, a Penalty Notice may be issued where a student is found by the school, Police or Local Authority in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Understanding types of absence.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Parents/carers keeping students off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Unexplained absences.
- Students who arrive at school late.
- Shopping, looking after other siblings.
- Day trips, holidays, and birthdays/family outings.

When a child remains absent for 10 school days after an authorised period of leave or after 20 days of unauthorised leave, the school will notify the local authority who will make reasonable enquiries regarding the student's whereabouts. The local authority will also be notified if a student fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 school days (continuous).

Deleting students from the School Register.

Since September 2013, a school has been able to delete a child's name from the Admissions Register, where a student is granted leave of absence and the criteria (i) to (iii) below are satisfied (see Children Missing in Education Policy):

- (i) The student failed to return to school within 10 school days or immediately following the expiry of a period of leave.
- (ii) The principal does not have reasonable grounds to believe the student is unable to attend by reason of sickness or other unavoidable causes or have contact with parent/carer.
- (iii) Both the school and the Local Authority have failed to make contact or know of the student's whereabouts after reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the student is.

Truancy.

If a student truants from school or leaves school without permission, this is regarded as an extremely serious matter, since it prevents the school from being able to fulfil its duty of care.

It may be necessary to inform the police that a student is missing.

Under no circumstances should students leave school without permission from a member of staff.

Any act of truancy will always be reported to parents, and significant sanctions will be issued in all cases.

Staff responsible for attendance at Shoreham Academy are:

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| • Principal | Jim Coupe |
| • Assistant Principal with responsibility for attendance. | Claire Joyce |
| • Education Welfare Officer | Bernadette Cartwright |
| • Attendance Officer | Lucy Thaxter |

Summary.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers also have a duty to make sure their sons/daughters attend every day and arrive on time. All school staff are committed to working with parents and students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.