



Clee Hill Community Academy

Attendance Policy



Author	Executive Headteacher – Katie Jones Reviewed by Headteacher – Ceri Little
Review Cycle	Annually
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Approved By	Local Governing Body
Next Review Date	September 2025

1 Aim of this policy

To support excellent levels of attendance for all pupils to enable fulfilment of their potential at Clee Hill Community Academy.

This policy has been prepared with regard to the Academy’s statutory duties relating to attendance, including those set out in the Department for Education’s statutory guidance entitled **Working together to improve school attendance** (2024), which is referred to in this policy as the “DfE Attendance Guidance”.

2 Key principles

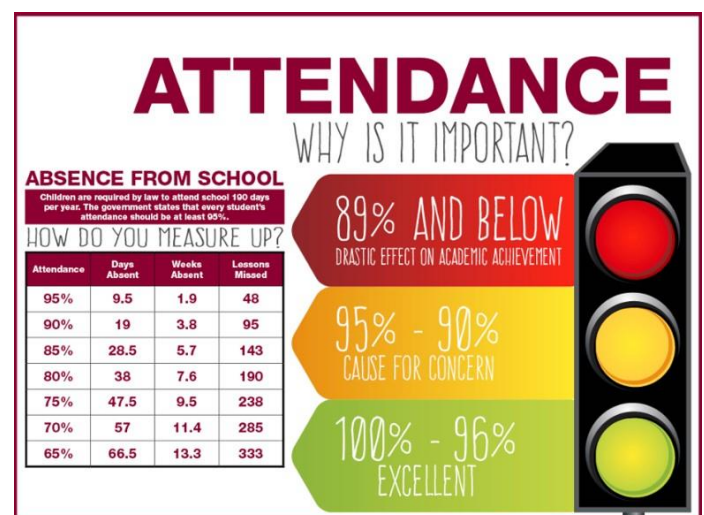
- High levels of attendance and punctuality levels are promoted and rewarded.
- It is the responsibility of everybody in the Academy to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Where attendance or punctuality fall short of expected standards, steps will be taken to address this and sanctions may be applied in accordance with the behaviour policy.
- Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. The Academy will work with pupils, parents and other local partners to remove any barriers to attendance.
- Subject to the terms of this policy, any day-to-day attendance issues that parents or pupils have should be discussed with class teachers. Where more detailed support around attendance is required, parents and pupils should contact Ceri Little, Headteacher.

Roles and responsibilities

2.1 The Academy

The Academy will:

- develop and maintain a whole academy culture that promotes the benefit of high attendance including:
 - ✓ Information promoting an understanding of the importance of good attendance and punctuality in our School News and on our website.
 - ✓ Letters which remind and highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
 - ✓ Termly pupil reports that include attendance statistics (attendance; lates; unauthorised absences; authorised absences).
 - ✓ A Management Information System (Arbor) which includes a parent portal where they can see their child’s attendance continuously.
- work with pupils and their families, building strong relationships, to support high levels of attendance and punctuality and understand any barriers to attendance
- investigate unexplained or unjustified absence, applying sanctions where appropriate



- take into account individual needs when implementing this policy, including having regard to the Academy's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- share information, including returns information required to be shared in accordance with regulations¹ and the DfE Attendance Guidance, and work collaboratively with the local authority, other schools in the area and other partners including, where required, making appropriate referrals in accordance with local procedures, legislation and guidance
- regularly monitor, review and analyse attendance and absence data including to identify pupils or cohorts that require attendance support and to set targets for the future
- ensure that all pupils can access full-time education, putting strategies in place where this is evidence to suggest that this is not the case
- ensure that the Trust's Directors, Local Governing Bodies and Academy's leadership team work together to monitor attendance levels and the effectiveness of this policy
- ensure that all legislation and guidance are complied with and reflected in our policies and procedures, including the DfE Attendance Guidance;
- have in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who are at risk of missing education, having regard to the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (please refer to our [Child Protection policy](#))
- provide information requested by the Secretary of State, including termly absence data collected by the Department for Education
- regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels
- support pupils who are returning to education following long term absence
- ensure that effective systems to record and report attendance data are in place, including accurate completion of admission and attendance registers using an electronic management information system
- assign overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the Academy to a designated senior leader, known as the Senior Attendance Champion
- observe and fulfil the responsibilities set out in guidance issued by the Department for Education ([Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) to the extent not covered above or elsewhere in this policy.

2.2 Parents and carers

We expect parents and carers to:

- ensure that their child arrives at the Academy on time, in the correct uniform and with the necessary equipment
- promote the importance of regular attendance at home
- follow the correct procedure for reporting the absence of their child from the Academy (see section 6.3 below)
- avoid unnecessary absences
- keep the Academy informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance

¹ School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

- not take their child out of education for holidays during term time (see section 6.5 below)
- inform the Academy in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren), along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live
- observe and fulfil their responsibilities set out in the guidance issued by the Department for Education: [Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) (publishing.service.gov.uk).

2.3 Pupils

We expect pupils to:

- attend the Academy regularly and on time
- be punctual to all lessons
- follow the correct procedure if they arrive to the Academy late (see sections 4 and 5 below).

2.4 Senior Attendance Champion

2.5 The Senior Attendance Champion (“**SAC**”) at the Academy is Ceri Little, headteacher.

2.6 The SAC has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at the Academy and will:

- set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and ensure that these are followed by all staff
- evaluate and monitor attendance expectations and processes
- have a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the Academy
- ensure that key attendance messages are communicated to parents and pupils
- provide data and reports to support the work of the Local Governing Body and Directors.

2.7 The Local Governing Body

2.8 The Local Governing Body will:

- take an active role in attendance improvement, recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the Academy’s ethos and policies
- ensure the Academy’s leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help Academy leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- ensure Academy staff receive adequate training on attendance, including dedicated training for staff with specific attendance responsibilities and any additional training that would help support pupils or cohorts overcome common barriers to attendance

2.9 The Board of Directors

2.10 The Board of Directors will:

- recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the Trust's ethos and policies
- share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across its academies
- hold termly attendance review meetings with the Academy through the Executive Headteacher
- [require the Academy to report to the trustees on the Academy's attendance at regular intervals]

3 Registration

3.1 The Academy maintains an attendance register and uses this to record each pupil's attendance at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon.

Registration session	Start time	End time
Morning	08:40	12:00
Afternoon	13:00	15:15

3.2 Pupils who arrive after the start of a registration session but before the end of the registration session will be marked as late. Where pupils arrive after the end of a registration session, the process set out at section 5 applies.

3.3 The register is marked using the national statutory attendance and absence codes which can be found in the [DfE Attendance Guidance](#).

3.4 Where a pupil attends a registration session but does not attend subsequent lessons, we will treat this as a truancy and non-attendance matter in accordance with the behaviour policy and engage parents where necessary.

4 Late arrival

4.1 If a pupil arrives at the Academy after the relevant registration period has ended but within the relevant session, they must immediately go to the Academy office to sign in and provide a reason for the lateness to enable the Academy to establish the appropriate attendance or absence code. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, the register will be marked as unauthorised absence.

4.2 Persistent lateness will be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in line with behaviour policy or if a pattern of lateness emerges the classteacher/headteacher will discuss the issue with parents and how it is negatively impacting on their child's education. If the pattern continues the appropriate support agencies will be informed.

5 Reasons for absence and how to report or request authorisation

5.1 **Authorised absence** - absence will only be authorised where the Academy has given approval in advance for a pupil to not be in attendance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for the absence. Only the Academy can authorise absence.

5.2 **Unauthorised absence** – absence will be marked as unauthorised where the Academy is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

5.3 Reporting absence from the Academy

5.3.1 Where a pupil is to be absent from the Academy without prior permission, the parent/carer should inform the Academy by telephone (01584890384) on the morning (by 9am or as soon as practically possible) of the day of the first absence and let the Academy know when they expect the pupil to return. If the return date is not confirmed on the first day of absence, parents/carers must contact the Academy on each day of absence.

- Any unexplained absence will be followed up by the Academy promptly. with emails, phone calls, texts and, where appropriate (before the end of the day if no information), safe and well checks, home welfare checks and/or invitation to parent/carer meetings. If no response is received by midday and the Academy cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will continue to call, may contact the police or other support services as appropriate.

5.3.2 In cases where the academy needs clarification to accurately record the absence in the attendance register, the parents/cares may be asked to provide the Academy with medical evidence, such as a note from the child's doctor to support an absence for illness. If satisfactory evidence is not provided, the absence may be marked as unauthorised.

5.4 Appointments

5.4.1 Medical, dental and other essential appointments for a pupil should take place outside of school hours where this is reasonably possible.

5.4.2 Where an appointment must take place during school time, the pupil should attend the Academy for as much of the day as possible and as much prior notice as possible should be given to Ceri Little – via the administrator.

5.5 Leave of absence (including holidays during term time)

5.5.1 The Academy will grant permission for a pupil to be absent from school in the circumstances described in paragraph 37 of the DfE Attendance Guidance which can be summarised as follows:

- taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- attendance at an interview for entry into another educational setting or future employment
- study leave for public examinations
- temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- other exceptional circumstances.

5.5.2 Parents and carers should make every effort to avoid taking pupils out of education for holidays or other extended leave during term time and they are not considered an exceptional circumstance.

5.5.3 To request a leave of absence, parents/carers must make the request in advance using the form in Appendix A and, wherever possible, at least 4 school weeks ahead of the planned leave.

5.5.4 Where a leave of absence is requested as above, the Head Teacher will consider the specific facts and circumstances relating to the request. The decision:

- will be confirmed in writing
- is solely at the Head Teacher's discretion and
- is final.

5.5.5 Where permission is granted, the Head Teacher will confirm the number of days and dates of absence which are authorised.

5.5.6 If permission is not granted and the parents/carers proceed to take their child out of the Academy, the absence will be marked as unauthorised and parents may be issued with a penalty notice or be subject to prosecution by the local authority (see section 7 below).

5.6 Religious observance

5.6.1 We recognise that pupils of certain faiths may need to participate in days of religious observance. Where a day of religious observance:

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs,

the absence from the Academy will be authorised.

5.6.2 We ask that parents/carers notify the Academy by using Appendix A in advance where absence is required due to religious observance.

5.7 Coronavirus (Covid-19)

5.7.1 There may be circumstances in which pupils cannot attend school due to Covid-19. The Academy will adhere to any current guidance issued by the Department for Education relating to the recording of attendance in relation to Covid-19.

6.7.2 If a pupil tests positive for coronavirus, their absence will be recorded as illness.

6 Addressing poor attendance and punctuality

6.1 The Academy will use data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or groups of pupils who need it most. In doing so, the Academy, led by the SAC, will:

- monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns, proactively using data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance
- provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and relevant leaders
- identify pupils who need support from wider partners as soon as possible and deliver this support in a targeted manner
- conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and fully year data to identify patterns and trends
- benchmark Academy attendance data at each level against local, regional and national level

- monitor the impact of academy strategies and actions to improve attendance on particular pupils and particular groups
- work with the local authority and other local partners to identify groups
- hold regular meetings with the parents or carers of pupils who the Academy and/or local authority consider to be vulnerable

6.2 Where absence or punctuality is a cause for concern, for example because there is:

- a pattern of unauthorised absence
- a question over the reasons provided for a particular absence or late arrival
- persistent truancy or lateness

we will make contact with the parents/carers with a view to working together to support improved attendance and/or punctuality. This may include:

- holding regular meetings and reviews to remove the barriers to attendance
- providing access to wider support services
- using an action plan format (Appendix B) where appropriate

6.3 In cases where the Academy has been unable to establish a clear reason for absence and/or has welfare concerns about the pupil, a home welfare check may be carried out.

6.4 Failure to attend or arrive at lessons on time may also be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the behaviour policy.

6.5 Absence will be classed as persistent where it falls below 90% across the academic year. Absence at this level is very likely to hinder educational prospects and we expect full parental co-operation and support to urgently address these cases. Intervention steps may include implementation of an attendance action plan, referral to other agencies and/or seeking to put in place an attendance contract.

6.6 Where out of school barriers to attendance are identified, the Academy will signpost and support access to any additional services.

6.7 Where parents/carers have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age is regularly attending the Academy and wider support in accordance with this policy is not appropriate or effective, we may consider issuing a penalty notice. A penalty notice is a financial penalty (£80 if paid within 21 days, £160 if paid within 28 days) imposed on parents which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution.

6.8 When considering whether to issue a penalty notice, we will have regard to:

- the National Framework for penalty notices as set out in paragraphs 175 – 201 of the DfE Attendance Guidance; and
- the local authority's Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices.

6.9 In the event that a penalty notice is issued but is not paid within 28 days, the local authority will decide whether to proceed to prosecution. The local authority also has separate powers to prosecute parents if their child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly.

Appendix A

Name Of School: Request for Pupil Leave of Absence in Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances

Headteachers can only authorise any absence when an application has been made in advance by the parent/carer with whom the child is normally resident and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. An annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance. There are 190 school days in an academic year, leaving 175 days free for families to take holidays.

Full name of child(ren)	Address:
Dates:	Number of School Days:
Reason for application and dates: The headteacher may take into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life. • It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event. • The event cannot be organised outside of the school term. • Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school. 	
Parent's full name: Parent's full name: Signature of parent(s)/carer(s): Date:	
<i>Office use only</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Authorised <input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorised Comments: Signed(headteacher): Date: <p style="text-align: center;">WARNING</p> <p>If this requested period of absence has not been authorised, details will be passed to Shropshire Council's Education Access Service. The Council may, in the following circumstances, issue a formal Warning, serve a Fixed Penalty Notice or take court action in respect of non-school attendance for this and any future unauthorised absence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have not sought permission from the headteacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time • The headteacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway; or • A pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation 	

Appendix B: Individual Attendance Plan

Name of pupil	
Year group/class	
Staff supporting with attendance plan and roles	
Date plan was agreed	

Attendance history

Include details of attendance percentages (broken down by attendance code where appropriate), details of trends or patterns over time and any historical factors that might be relevant.

Current risk factors/current barriers to attendance

To help with this, it might be useful to carry out an individual attendance audit (see appendix).

Targets	Milestones	Date each milestone achieved
Target 1 -	For each target provide a number of measurable milestones •	
Target 2 -	•	
Target 3 -	•	

Strategies to be implemented by the school

Details of strategy (including date commenced)	Purpose of implementing strategy	Member of staff responsible
E.g. as a result of pupil voice about anxiety in some lessons class teacher/TA will check in regularly.	E.g. point of contact to support and reassure	E.g. Form tutor, class teacher, TA

Expectations of the pupil

Details of expectations	How this has been communicated to the pupil?	Monitoring arrangements (who by and when?)
E.g. set an alarm for 7 a.m. every day	E.g. discussion with attendance officer and ongoing reminders	E.g. attendance officer will monitor this daily

Expectations of the family

Details of expectations	How this has been communicated to the pupil's family?	Monitoring arrangements (who by and when?)

E.g. for parents to phone school before 9 a.m. to report the reason for any absence	E.g. expectations explained during face-to-face attendance meeting and agreed by parents	E.g. attendance officer will monitor this daily
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External support

Details of agency/partner	Support being offered	Date support commenced
E.g. Early Help	E.g. Early Help referral has been made as meets 3/10 outcomes	E.g. referral made 2nd November - currently awaiting first contact

Record of attendance reviewing meeting

Date of review	
Individuals present	
Situation since last review	
Milestones/targets achieved since last review	
Areas discussed	
Outcome of meeting (tick as appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/> Continue with initial plan <input type="checkbox"/> Continue plan with new or supplementary strategies added <input type="checkbox"/> Escalate attendance plan to next stage
Date of next review	

Appendix 1: Individual Attendance Audit

Potential barrier to attendance	Has this been explored?	Could this be a factor in the pupil's poor attendance?	Notes
Health-related issues			
Medical problems	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poor medical care	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Disability	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poor mental health	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poorly controlled medical issue(s)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Pregnancy	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Potential substance abuse	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Health issues caused by unsanitary environment or poor housing	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Other (give details below)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Home-related issues			

Young carer	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Caring for younger siblings	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Potential substance abuse in the home	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Parental mental health issues	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Potential domestic violence in the home	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Potential abuse/neglect	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Financial issues in the home	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Unable to afford/obtain correct uniform	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Homelessness	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Other (give details below)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	

Social issues

Bullying	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Issues with peer group	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Issues with personal relationships	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Potentially involved in gangs/criminal activity	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Doesn't feel safe on journey to/from school	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Other (give details below)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	

Academic issues

Poor academic performance	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Undiagnosed or suspected SEND	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Unmet academic needs	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Issues with staff	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Frequently excluded	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Other (give details below)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	

<i>Transport problems</i>			
Too far to travel	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Lacking a reliable means to get to school	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Cannot afford transport costs	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Doesn't feel safe on school/public transport	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Other (give details below)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	

<i>Pupil factors</i>			
Low self-esteem/ confidence	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Low aspirations	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poor morning routines	Yes / Not yet Who by? When??	Yes / Unsure / No	
Poor sleeping patterns	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Gender/sexuality anxieties	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	
Other (give details below)	Yes / Not yet Who by? When?	Yes / Unsure / No	