SHREWSBURY HOUSE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1865

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy owner:	SAC - Senior Deputy Head
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Key School Contacts

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1 Aims

1.1 This is the attendance policy of Shrewsbury House School

1.2 The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.

1.3 The aims of this policy are as follows:

1.3.1 to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;

1.3.2 to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;

1.3.3 to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;

1.3.4 to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and

1.3.5 to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

2 Scope and Application

2.1 This policy applies to the whole School.

2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

3 Regulatory Framework

3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;

3.1.2 Education and Skills Act 2008;

3.1.3 Children Act 1989

3.1.4 Childcare Act 2006;
3.1.5 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
3.1.6 Equality Act 2010; and
3.1.7 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

3.2.1 Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
3.2.2 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
3.2.3 Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, September 2023);
3.2.4 Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, September 2023);
3.2.5 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
3.2.6 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);
3.2.7 School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);
3.2.8 Children missing education (DfE, September 2016);
3.2.9 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
3.2.10 Behaviour in schools: advice for Executive Headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
3.2.11 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
3.2.12 Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
3.2.13 Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
3.2.14 Remote education guidance (DfE, updated February 2023); and
3.2.15 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015)

3.3 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

3.3.1 Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures
3.3.2 Risk assessment policy
3.3.3 Policy on special educational needs and learning difficulties
3.3.4 Behaviour Management Policy
3.3.5 Parent Contract

4 Publication and Availability

4.1 This policy is published on the School website.

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

5 Definitions and Interpretation

5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

5.1.1 references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.

5.1.2 references to the **Proprietor** are references to the Board of Governors.

5.1.3 references to a **Parent** means:

(a) all natural parents, whether they are married or not;

(b) any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and

(c) any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

5.1.4 References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school.

5.1.5 **SAC** means the School's attendance champion, Mr Jon Albert.

6 Responsibility Statement and Allocation of Tasks

6.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

6.2 The Proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the SAC.

6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated the following tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	SAC	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Proprietor	Annually

7 The Importance of Good Attendance

7.1 The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

7.1.1 the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;

7.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support,

supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;

7.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents;

7.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and

7.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

8 School Responsibilities

8.1 The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.

8.2 The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and parents.

8.3 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.

8.4 The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

8.5 The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

9 Staff Responsibilities

9.1 <u>The SAC</u>

The Proprietor has appointed a senior member of staff of the School's leadership team as SAC to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. Details of the individual appointed are at the front of this policy and are communicated via the School Website.

9.1.1 The SAC's responsibilities are:

(a) to set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;

(b) to establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;

(c) to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;

(d) to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and

(e) to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and parents.

9.2 Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance

The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

9.2.1 have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon;

9.2.2 seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;

9.2.3 make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with pupil to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;

9.2.4 look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the SAC of any specific concerns;

9.2.5 deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;

9.2.6 consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and

9.2.7 discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

9.3 All staff

9.3.1 The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it.

9.3.2 The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

10 School Arrangements

10.1 The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. These registers must be kept electronically. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the School's arrangements can be found in Appendices Appendix 1-Appendix 3.

11 Monitoring Attendance

11.1 The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:

11.1.1 monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;

11.1.2 using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);

11.1.3 conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;

11.1.4 benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;

11.1.5 devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;

11.1.6 monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and

11.1.7 providing data and reports to the Proprietor to support its work.

12 Pupil Responsibilities

12.1 School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

12.2 Pupils should be aware that:

12.2.1 they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;

12.2.2 they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;

12.2.3 they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;

12.2.4 they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;

12.2.5 any unexplained absence will be followed up;

12.2.6 persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:

(a) offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance;

(b) communication with parents;

(c) reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and

(d) sanctions against them or their parents in line with the School's behaviour policies.

12.2.7 If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their Form Tutor or those staff identified in Appendix 1 in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

13 Additional Needs

13.1 The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

13.2 The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

13.3 It will also work with parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.

13.4 Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

13.5 Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

13.6 The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

14 Parent / Carer Responsibilities

14.1 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.

14.2 This means pupils 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.

14.3 The School will help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.

14.4 Expectations the School places on parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy.

14.5 Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

15 Training

15.1 **Staff:** The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:

15.1.1 the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and

15.1.2 the School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

15.2 Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. This should include:

15.2.1 the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;

15.2.2 the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;

15.2.3 the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and

15.2.4 any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

15.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

16 Information Sharing

16.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

16.2 The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

16.3 Where appropriate the schools will attend regular targeting support meetings.

16.4 The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

16.4.1 new pupil and deletion returns;

16.4.2 attendance returns;

16.4.3 sickness returns.

16.5 The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

16.6 The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State. The School meets this requirement by having an electronic management information system containing the required information that can be accessed by the DfE. The School also uses this tool to monitor pupil level attendance and understand trends in attendance patterns.

16.7 Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

17 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

17.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

17.2 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

Appendix 1 School Arrangements

1 Managing attendance

1.1 The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law and set out in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 respectively. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.

1.2 The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 08.20 am to close at 4.00 pm, but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

2 The role of parents / carers

2.1 The School expects all Parents to:

2.1.1 make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity via the Parent Portal;

2.1.2 notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and

2.1.3 cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

2.2 Parents of day pupils should ensure their child attends School by 08.20 am for morning registration;

3 Registration and attendance checks

3.1 Morning registration is at 08.20 am. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes after the start of morning registration.

3.2 Afternoon registration will be at 2.05 pm during the start of period 7.

4 Reporting absence

4.1 If a pupil is absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the School Office by email, office@shstrust.net / telephone by 08.15 am on the first morning of absence;

4.2 Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness.

5 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence

Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 3.

6 Managing absence

The School's processes for managing and supporting absences including supporting a pupil's return to school after more than 3 days of absence are set out in the Parent Handbook.

7 Authorised absences

7.1 Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

8 Applications for an authorised leave of absence

8.1 Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if requested via the Parent Portal addressed to the Executive Head.

8.2 The School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, the pupil's past attendance record and the relevant background context behind the request.

8.3 Apart from illness, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from the Executive Head.

8.4 Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays except in cases of emergency when a request for absence should be made via the Parent Portal.

8.5 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Executive Head to determine the length of the time the pupil is permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. See section 3 of Appendix 3 for more details.

8.6 A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance via the Parent Portal.

9 Reporting duties

9.1 The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attend and their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.

9.2 Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.

9.3 Action will also be taken in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

Appendix 2 Admission Register

1 Admission Register

1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:

1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and

1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.

1.2 The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

1.3 The School must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.

1.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school they last attended.

1.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.

1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:

1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;

1.6.2 the address of the pupil;

1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;

1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;

1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;

1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;

1.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 3 Attendance Register

1 Attendance Register

1.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024

1.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.

1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

1.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

1.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:

1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or

1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or

1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or

1.6.4 absent.

1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

1.7.1 attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;

1.7.2 for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;

1.7.3 attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;

1.7.4 attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;

1.7.5 attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording Absence

2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

2.1.1 leaves of absence;

2.1.2 other authorised reasons;

2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;

2.1.4 unauthorised absence.

3 Remote Education

3.1 The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.

3.2 The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.

3.3 In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:

3.3.1 ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;

3.3.2 if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;

3.3.3 setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.

3.4 Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.

3.5 The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

4 Unauthorised absence

4.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

4.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Executive Head;

4.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;

4.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;

4.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

Attendance Codes

[O] Unauthorised absence

[Y] Unable to Attend - Exceptional Circumstances

[S] Study leave

[#] School closed to pupils

[R] Religious Observance

[/] Present

[C] Other Authorised Circumstance

[N] No reason yet provided for absence

[M] Medical/Dental Appointment

[Q] Late-PM

[L] Late (before registers closed)

[U] Late (after registers closed)

[J] Interview

[I] Illness (NOT medical/dental appointment)

[G] Family holiday (not agreed)

[H] Family holiday (agreed)

[E] Excluded (incl suspensions)

[V] Educational visit or trip

[B] Educated off site

[D] Attending other establishment

[P] Approved Sporting Activity