Adventure Wellbeing School

Attendance Policy

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Introduction

At Adventure Wellbeing School, we firmly believe that high standards of attendance and punctuality are fundamental to ensuring every child reaches their full potential. We recognise that regular and consistent school attendance is directly linked to improved academic achievement, personal development, and overall wellbeing. Attendance is not only an essential factor in learning outcomes but also a safeguarding priority, ensuring that children are present, engaged, and receiving the education and support they need to thrive.

Our approach to attendance is proactive and supportive, encouraging students and their families to understand the importance of daily school attendance while providing appropriate guidance and intervention when necessary. Through a collaborative approach, we work closely with parents, carers, staff, external agencies, and the local authority to ensure that attendance expectations are met, and any barriers to attendance are identified and addressed effectively.

Legal Framework and Responsibilities

Attendance at school is a legal requirement under the Education Act 1996, which places a statutory duty on parents to ensure their child regularly attends school. Section 444 of the Act states that:

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence."

Failure to comply with attendance expectations may result in enforcement action, including:

- Legal prosecution
- Education Supervision Orders, requiring parents to engage with support services to improve their child's attendance.

Our school aligns with Department for Education (DfE) guidance. A target of 95% and defines persistent absenteeism as attendance below 90%. We actively monitor and address low attendance to ensure early intervention and appropriate support for students at risk.

Attendance and Safeguarding

Regular attendance plays a critical role in child protection and safeguarding. Children who do not attend school regularly are at an increased risk of harm, including exposure to:

- Neglect or domestic abuse
- Exploitation, including county lines or child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Emotional and mental health challenges due to isolation from peers and educators

As part of our statutory safeguarding responsibilities (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026), we closely monitor attendance patterns and report unexplained absences that may raise safeguarding concerns. If a child is absent from school without a known reason, the school will:

1. Attempt to contact the parent/carer by phone or text message on the first day of absence.
2. Conduct home visits if there are safeguarding concerns and repeated absences.
3. Make a referral to external agencies, such as Social Services or the Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO), where necessary.

All school staff have a duty of care to report irregular attendance, unexplained absences, or concerning patterns of absence to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for further investigation.

Promoting Good Behaviour and Discipline

The prevention of unauthorised absences is integral to fostering a positive school culture where pupils are engaged, motivated, and feel a sense of belonging. High attendance rates contribute to:

Better academic outcomes, ensuring that students do not fall behind in their learning. Positive relationships with peers and teachers, improving social development.

A structured routine that prepares pupils for future education and employment.

Persistent absenteeism often correlates with poor behaviour, disengagement from learning, and lower academic performance. By ensuring that pupils attend school regularly, we help them develop resilience, self-discipline, and a strong work ethic, equipping them with essential life skills.

As part of our Relational Support Policy and Attendance Policy, we use early intervention strategies, including:

- Regular attendance monitoring to track patterns and address concerns promptly.
- Support for families experiencing challenges that impact school attendance.
- Incentive schemes and rewards for pupils who maintain excellent attendance.

Through a holistic approach, we aim to reduce barriers to learning, improve student engagement, and foster a culture where attendance is valued and prioritised.

Aims

At Adventure Wellbeing School, we are dedicated to fostering a culture of attendance excellence by ensuring that every pupil benefits from a full and uninterrupted education. Our attendance policy is designed to promote consistency, accountability, and positive reinforcement, ensuring that attendance remains a shared responsibility between the school, parents, and pupils.

To achieve this, we aim to:

1. Proactively Prevent Absences Before They Occur
    - Identify and support pupils who may be at risk of developing poor attendance habits early on.
    - Implement intervention strategies for those with declining attendance patterns.
    - Provide pastoral support for pupils facing emotional, medical, or social barriers to attendance.
2. Create a Positive and Rewarding Attendance Culture
    - Recognise and celebrate improvements in attendance alongside perfect attendance.
    - Promote the importance of punctuality and regular school attendance across all year groups.
    - Encourage a growth mindset, where pupils feel motivated to attend school through rewards, certificates, and incentives.
3. Ensure a Fair and Transparent Approach to Attendance Monitoring
    - Maintain a consistent, structured, and well-communicated approach to monitoring attendance.
    - Clearly define expectations, procedures, and consequences regarding unauthorised absences.
    - Use technology and real-time data to enable early intervention and personalised support.
4. Support Families in Meeting Their Attendance Responsibilities
    - Work with parents/carers to remove barriers affecting their child's school attendance.
    - Offer guidance, home visits, and intervention strategies for struggling families.

- Establish mutual trust and cooperation, ensuring parents feel informed, valued, and engaged in the process.

5. Strengthen Partnerships with External Agencies
   - Engage with health professionals, social services, and community organisations to support families facing challenges.
   - Maintain a multi-agency approach when attendance concerns link to welfare or safeguarding risks.
   - Work in line with Local Authority guidance to uphold legal attendance requirements.

Rationale

Ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality is a key priority at Adventure Wellbeing School because of its direct impact on educational achievement, behaviour, and future success. Our approach to improving attendance is structured, supportive, and data-driven, ensuring that pupils receive the best possible opportunities to learn, develop, and thrive.

1. Utilising Technology for Efficient Attendance Tracking
   - We use SIMs to ensure accurate, real-time monitoring of attendance data.
   - Attendance records are digitally stored and analysed, enabling us to track trends and implement interventions.
   - Automated alerts enable the school to respond immediately to first-day absences, reducing safeguarding risks.
2. Raising Awareness Through Whole-School Engagement
   - Attendance is a key focus in assemblies, newsletters, and parent communications, reinforcing its importance.
   - Staff receive training to ensure they can effectively identify and support pupils at risk of persistent absence.
   - Assertive mentoring ensures that pupils struggling with attendance receive individualised support and encouragement.
3. Strengthening Parental Engagement
   - We recognise that parental attitudes towards attendance significantly impact pupil attendance rates.
   - Regular meetings, workshops, and home-school communication help build a collaborative approach.
   - Parents are informed of their legal obligations and offered support before formal intervention becomes necessary.
4. Working in Collaboration with Key Stakeholders

A multi-agency approach is vital in tackling attendance issues effectively. We work closely with:

Family Support Workers (FSW): Providing practical and emotional support to families in need.

Pastoral Support (PS): Supporting pupils with social, emotional, or behavioural challenges impacting attendance.

Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO): Ensuring that legal attendance requirements are met and appropriate enforcement action is taken when needed.

Council's Attendance and Inclusion Team: Addressing complex attendance cases and supporting families through educational welfare initiatives.

Registers

At Adventure Wellbeing School, accurate and timely attendance recording is a key part of our commitment to safeguarding, academic success, and pupil well-being. Attendance registers are completed twice daily, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions, in accordance with DfE statutory guidance.

Electronic Attendance System: SIMs

We use SIMs, a secure and efficient digital attendance monitoring system, to:

- Record and store attendance data in real-time.
- Identify patterns of absence or lateness for early intervention. Send automatic alerts for unexplained absences to parents/carers.
- Generate attendance reports for parents, staff, and external agencies. Authorised vs. Unauthorised Absences

Absences from school are categorised as either authorised or unauthorised, based on government and school criteria. Authorised Absences (DfE-recognised):

Absences may be authorised only when sufficient evidence is provided. These include:

- Illness, medical, or dental appointments (proof may be required for repeated absences). Religious observance (in line with faith-based requirements).
- School admission interviews or exams (e.g., secondary school assessments). Fixed-term or permanent exclusions (while awaiting appeal).
- Traveller children with dual registration (if agreed in advance with both schools). Family bereavement (discretionary; schools may require supporting evidence).

Unauthorised Absences (Not Recognised by the DfE):

The school will not authorise absences for the following reasons:

- Holidays during term time (except in exceptional circumstances). Shopping trips, birthdays, or leisure activities.
- Oversleeping or missing transport.
- Parent's refusal to send a child to school (without valid reason).

Repeated unauthorised absences may result in formal action, including:

- Legal intervention from the Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO). Potential court proceedings if attendance does not improve.
- All absences must be reported by 9:00 a.m. on the first day of absence via phone, email, or Class Dojo message. Failure to provide a valid reason within five school days will result in the absence being marked as unauthorised.

Punctuality & Late Collection

At Adventure Wellbeing School, we place strong emphasis on punctuality, recognising that regular lateness can disrupt learning, impact a child's progress, and set negative habits for the future.

Morning Registration & Late Arrivals

- The school day starts at 8:30 a.m., and pupils are expected to be in their classrooms ready to learn.
- Registers close at 8:45 a.m. Pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as late ('L').
- Pupils arriving after 9 a.m. will receive a 'U' (Unauthorised Absence) for the morning session, which negatively impacts their attendance record.

Consequences of Persistent Lateness

3 instances of lateness in a half-term: A verbal reminder to parents.

5 instances of lateness: A formal letter from the school warning of potential intervention. Ongoing lateness: A parental meeting with the Head of School and Attendance Lead.

Referral to the Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO) if lateness persists.

Late arrivals must report to the school office, where they will be required to provide a reason before being admitted to class.

Late Collection Policy

- All pupils must be collected promptly at dismissal time.
- Pupils not collected within 10 minutes will be taken to the school office, where a staff member will supervise them.
- Late collections will be recorded, and parents will receive a formal warning if lateness is persistent.
- If a pupil is not collected within 30 minutes, the school may: Attempt all emergency contacts.

Notify Children's Services if contact cannot be made.

Refer to safeguarding teams if lateness is a persistent welfare concern.

We expect all parents and carers to make appropriate arrangements to ensure their child is collected on time. Repeated late collections may result in the involvement of social care services or further action.

Attendance Monitoring and Reporting

At Adventure Wellbeing School, we prioritise data-driven attendance monitoring to ensure timely intervention, parental engagement, and improved pupil outcomes. Our advanced attendance tracking software, Sims, allows us to efficiently record, monitor, and analyse pupil attendance trends.

Key Functions of Our Attendance Software

Individual Pupil Attendance Reports – Attendance data for each pupil can be printed and shared with parents during meetings or included in school reports. This supports transparent communication about attendance concerns.

Identifying Vulnerable and At-Risk Pupils – The system helps us flag pupils with declining attendance or those at risk of becoming persistently absent (below 90%), enabling early intervention and pastoral support.

First-Day Absence Calls and Texts – Parents/carers receive automated notifications via phone or text if a pupil is absent without prior notice, ensuring that absences are swiftly addressed and unexplained absences are minimised.

Recognising High Attendance for Rewards – Attendance data is used to identify pupils with excellent or improved attendance, allowing us to celebrate achievements through certificates, awards, and incentives.

Monitoring Trends and Early Intervention – The system tracks patterns of absence, punctuality, and lateness, helping the school take proactive steps before attendance becomes a major issue.

Regular Reports to Proprietors – The proprietary body receives termly reports on whole-school attendance, enabling strategic oversight and accountability. Persistent absence figures and intervention strategies are reviewed to ensure effective attendance management.

Parental Responsibilities & Communication

At Adventure Wellbeing School, we recognise that parents play a crucial role in ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance. Under UK law, parents have a legal duty to make sure their child attends school on time, every day, and ready to learn.

Legal Responsibilities of Parents

The Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure their child regularly attends school. Absence Communication Procedures

To minimise disruption and ensure the safety of our pupils, we ask parents to follow these communication procedures:

- Notify the school before 8.15a.m. on the first day of absence. Provide a valid reason via telephone
- Phone call to the school office Email or Class Dojo message
- Verbal message at the school office
- For absences of more than one day, parents must update the school daily unless a formal medical note has been provided.

Unexplained Absences

If a parent fails to provide an explanation within five school days, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and will count toward potential legal action.

If no contact is received the school may:

- Conduct a home visit to ensure the child's welfare.
- Report ongoing absences to the Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO).
- Refer cases to safeguarding teams where necessary.

By maintaining strong communication and promptly reporting absences, parents help us keep their children safe and engaged in learning.

Absence Management

Leave of Absence Requests

- Parents must submit all requests for leave of absence in writing to the Executive Headteacher.
- Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g., bereavement, medical treatment abroad).
- Requests for term-time holidays will not be approved, except in highly exceptional situations.

Unauthorised Absences

- Holidays during term time will not be authorised.

- If a child is taken out of school without permission, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents may face legal action.

Support for Families

We understand that some families may experience genuine challenges affecting attendance. We encourage parents to:

- Communicate openly with the school about any difficulties.
- Engage with our support services (Pastoral Support, Family Support Worker).
- Access external assistance, such as the Local Authority Inclusion Team or Early Help services.

Our aim is to work with parents, not against them, ensuring that barriers to attendance are identified and addressed before legal action becomes necessary.

Promoting Good Attendance

At Adventure Wellbeing School, we believe that attendance should be celebrated and that pupils should be motivated and encouraged to attend school regularly. To promote a culture of good attendance, we offer a range of incentives and recognition schemes to reward pupils who consistently meet attendance expectations.

Pupil Incentives for Excellent Attendance

Termly Certificates – Pupils with 100% attendance each term receive a certificate of achievement, recognising their commitment to learning.

Prize Draws – Pupils with excellent attendance (95% and above) are entered into a termly prize draw, with the chance to win rewards.

End-of-Year Recognition – Pupils who achieve 100% attendance across the entire academic year are celebrated in a special awards assembly and receive a trophy or special prize.

Class Attendance Challenges – Classes with the highest attendance rate receive weekly recognition, with class rewards such as extra playtime or special privileges.

Parental Engagement & Involvement

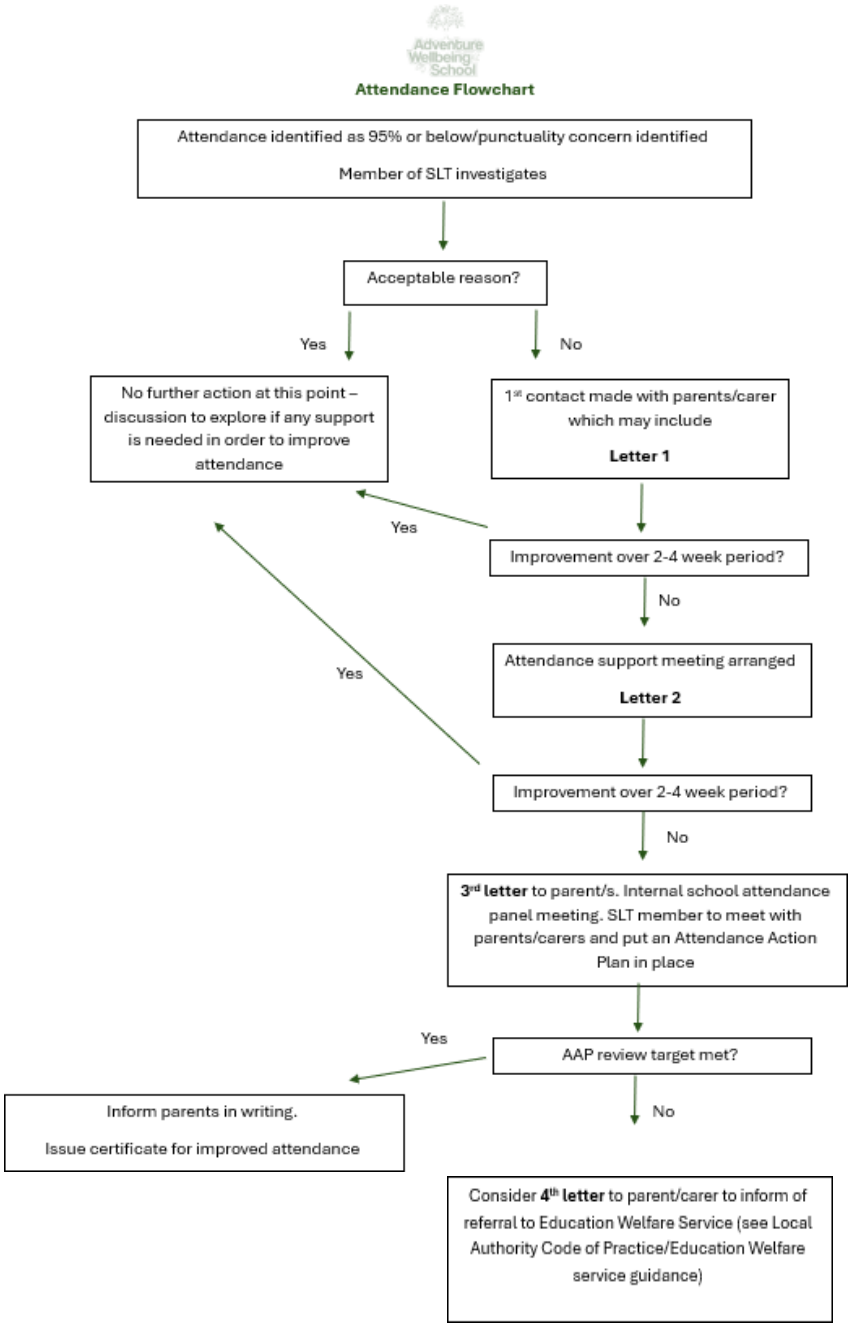
We recognise that parents play a vital role in promoting their child's attendance. As part of our whole-school attendance strategy, we:

- Discuss attendance at parent meetings, highlighting the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Issue certificates for improved attendance, acknowledging pupils who have made significant progress.
- Hold workshops and information sessions to support parents in understanding attendance expectations and legal responsibilities.
- Encourage home-school partnerships, where parents work closely with staff and support teams to overcome any barriers to attendance.

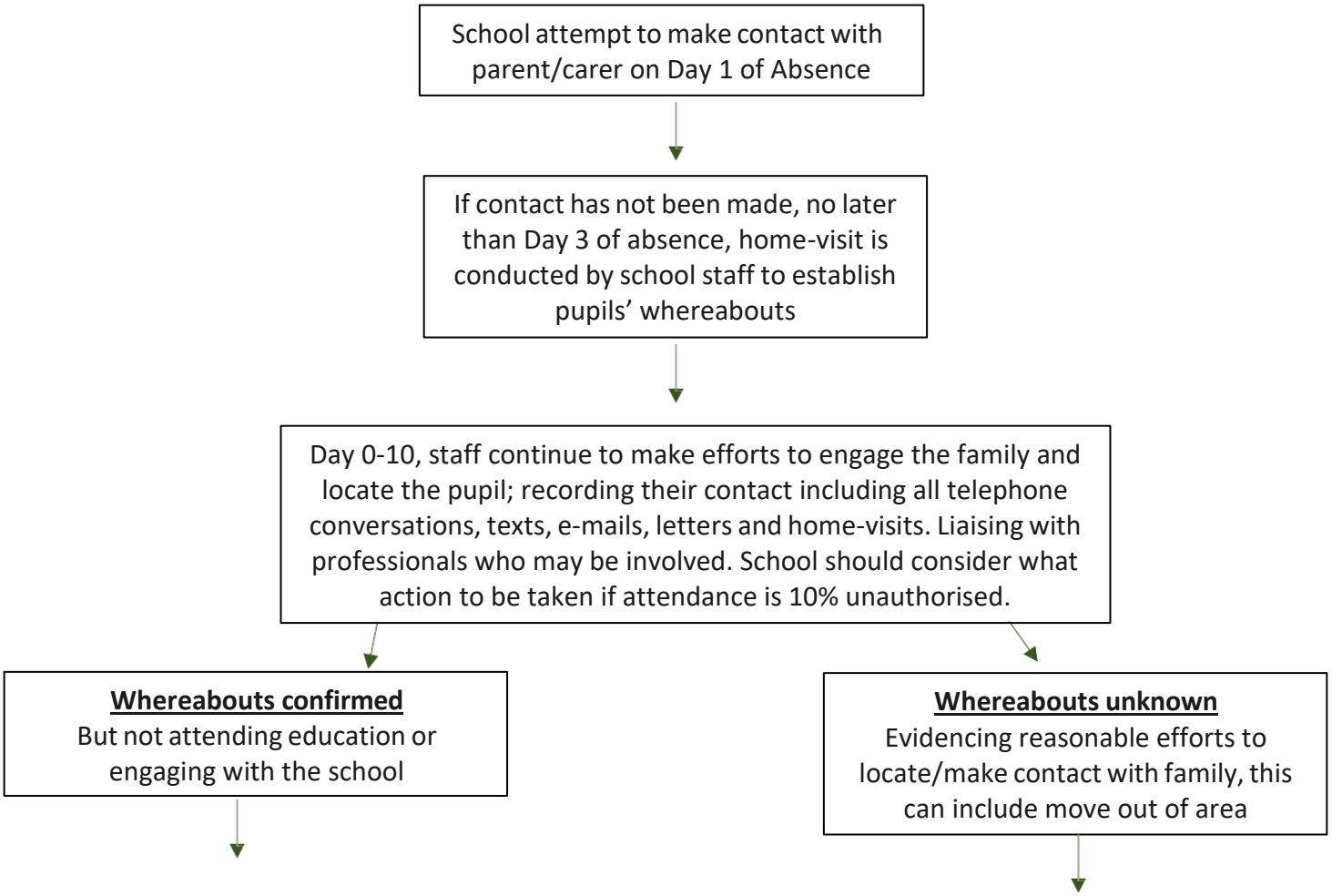
By reinforcing positive attendance habits from an early age, we ensure that pupils develop the self-discipline, resilience, and commitment needed for lifelong success.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Attendance Process Flowchart



Appendices 2 – Managing Unexplained Absences and Responding to Children Missing in Education



- Child and family meet the threshold for Early Help or Social Care involvement. Make a referral evidencing the actions you have taken.
- Contact the LA SEND team if parent expresses, they no longer want to attend the school.
- Absence meets the threshold for enforcement action as outlined in the Local Authority Code of Conduct; Child stays on roll.
- Consider if a reintegration plan may support the return to school
- If child is absent due to medical needs, refer to LA medical needs team as per guidance Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs

- Referral is made to: Children Missing Education Team no later than day 10 when there is no explanation for absence and above checks have been completed Children missing education | Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Detail clearly any safeguarding concerns you may have
- Do not remove child from roll until CME team has completed initial checks and confirmed child should be taken from roll

Appendices 3 – Weekly Attendance Monitoring Report

This table provides a weekly snapshot of pupil attendance across commissioning local authorities. It is designed to support strategic oversight by SLT by highlighting trends across the academic year, current term and the current week. Where attendance concerns are identified, the table supports the identification of individual pupils requiring further monitoring or intervention. This report is updated weekly and submitted to SLT each Wednesday.

Attendance overview table

Local Authority	This academic year (%)	This term (%)	This week (%)	Number of pupils on roll	Commentary or emerging concerns

Individual pupil attendance monitoring table (to be completed when attendance falls below 90% across the year)

Pupil name	Local authority	Year group	This week's attendance percentage	Term attendance percentage	Primary reason for absence	Risk level	Actions in place	Next review date