

Last Review	November 2021
Next Review	September 2022
Frequency	Annually

# Attendance Policy

## **A Whole School Approach to Attendance**

Milton school is committed to maximising the achievement of all pupils by promoting good attendance and providing support where required.

### **Why do we need good attendance?**

Every day we equip our pupils with the tools to succeed in their preparation for adulthood, whether this be college, a work placement or independent living and this starts with good attendance in school. Evidence is clear with the link between attendance and achievement, and every day in school presents a new learning opportunity to grow and develop. To give our pupils the best possible outcomes we regard regular and punctual attendance as essential. Missing one day per week equals one year of school missed over the course of five years. So, it is vital that pupils attend school at every opportunity possible.

**We are aware that each pupil has different needs or circumstances which may require additional time from school to accommodate these circumstances.**

### **We aim to:**

1. Improve and maintain overall attendance working towards a whole school attendance of 96%
2. Work with pupils and families who have irregular attendance and/or persistent lateness
3. Act early to address patterns of absence
4. Regularly review strategies to increase and improve whole school attendance
5. Help pupils and families to understand the value of a good attendance at school

**To help us achieve our attendance goals Milton School expects that we expect that our pupils will:**

- Work with their families to have the best attendance possible
- Attend school punctually and regularly
- Understand and respect the school Behaviour Expectations
- Give their best effort to maximise their learning potential when they are in school

**To help us achieve our attendance goals Milton School expects that we expect that our parents/carers/families will:**

- Work with their child to have the best attendance possible
- Engage with school if they are having difficulties with maintaining good attendance
- Follow the schools' absence procedures if their child will be absent from school on the first day of the absence
- Where possible organise routine dental or medical appointments outside of school time
- Limit the time pupils take out of school for a non-illness/medical reason
- Understand their legal duty by ensuring their child attend school regularly

**To help us achieve our attendance goals Milton School expects that we expect that Business Support Team will:**

- Work with all pupils, staff, and families to promote good attendance
- Ensure all absence line messages are received and Arbor is updated
- Contact all families if there has been no message received regarding a pupil's absence by 1000am
- Inform without delay the ATLAS team if an identified pupil is absent from school
- Be vigilant and conscientious when liaising with parents regarding a pupil's absence e.g., same reason, background noise does not fit with where they are, patterns of absence etc
- Ensure registers are completed and there are no 'missing' marks
- Contact Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and/or Access to Learning and Support (ATLAS) if they have any immediate concerns about a pupil

**To help us achieve our attendance goals Milton School expects that we expect that our staff will:**

- Work with pupils and families to promote and encourage good attendance
- Regularly celebrate good attendance with individual and class achievements
- Communicate with the Business Support Team regarding planned absences e.g., college visits
- Be understanding of a child's circumstances if attendance is below 96%
- Update class attendance data on a weekly basis
- Raise any concerns with the ATLAS team
- Use intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in line with the behaviour policy
- Act as a positive role model for all learners
- Contact Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and/or Access to Learning and Support (ATLAS if they have any immediate concerns about a pupil

**To help us achieve our attendance goals Milton School expects that we expect that Miss McCabe & ATLAS team will:**

- Work with pupils and families to promote and encourage good attendance
- Set and monitor attendance targets
- Act early and involve external agencies if required
- Hold regular meetings with SLT and/or class teachers for any on-going concerns
- Promote good attendance through ePraise, Newsletters, Twitter, School Events, Assemblies etc
- Ensure that accurate records are maintained to enable procedures to be followed correctly
- Challenge families when patterns of unexplained absences appear
- Invite families in to meet, if/when attendance drops under 96%
- Meet and greet families of persistent lateness on the gate to promote good punctuality
- Conduct home visits as and when required
- Offer Early Help Assessments to families to support with attendance
- Remind families of the attendance pathway
- Inform the local authority if strategies to improve attendance with identified families has not improved
- Follow the steps to Children Missing from Education from the Children Missing from Education Policy

**To help us achieve our attendance goals Milton School expects that we expect that SLT Lead – Assistant Principal responsible for Pastoral will:**

- Work with all school users to promote a good and consistent attendance of 96%
- Be understanding and accommodating to each individual circumstance relating to absence and/or persistent lateness
- Attend regular meetings with the ATLAS team
- Ensure the ATLAS team have the time and resources to fulfil their roles to monitor and support attendance
- Provide regular reports to the LGB on attendance matters within school
- Update and review the Attendance Policy on an annual basis
- Report to the LEA & DfE data required

**To help us achieve our attendance goals Milton School expects that we expect that our Local Governing Body will:**

- Regularly review and monitor attendance targets 96%
- Challenge SLT if targets or progress is not been made as expected
- Be understanding of individual circumstances relating to absence
- Attend events as to promote good attendance or present awards in recognition of good attendance or improved attendance
- Ensure staff have time to complete their duties to promote good attendance in school

## **Attendance Rewards**

All pupils who achieve above 96% attendance for a half-term will be entered into a prize draw within their Key Stage. EYFS+KS1, KS2, KS3 & KS4. The prize will be a £10 voucher of their choice.

There will also be certificates, medals, assemblies, badges, shout outs, tweets etc recognising attendance and punctuality achievements. This also can include progress on attendance and punctuality.

## **Registers**

Milton School uses Arbor to record attendance in school.

We have a lawful duty to have both an admissions registers and an attendance register. Teaching staff will only complete the register with a / or N, to ensure the right codes and notes are recorded only the Business Support & ALTAS team, will change codes once the reason for absence has been received. This is to ensure efficiency and consistency.

All registers are completed in line with nationally approved codes, and we are notified by the DfE for any changes to codes or procedures.

## **Holidays in Term Time**

Taking holidays in term time can have a detrimental effect on a child's education in school however, Milton School does understand that for some of our pupils taking a holiday during term-time can be better to accommodate their individual needs and circumstances. To ensure this is an authorised absence, a holiday must be completed and signed by the Head of School. If permission is not granted this would be class as an unauthorised absence. Alternatively, the Local Authority may take legal action against families for the non-attendance of a child where they have taken multiple leave of absences.

## **Parenting Contracts, Orders and Penalty Notices**

We expect all parents/carers to work with school at an early stage to resolve any attendance issues. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Local Authority. The school will always try to work with parents/carers to resolve attendance problems, but if this is unsuccessful the Local Authority may use legal action, such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Local Authorities have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school. Full details of the legal options are available from the school or the Local Authority.

## **Children Missing Education**

Children missing from education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at a school (for example, at home or in alternative provision). Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) later in life. All pupils at risk of CME are reported to the Local Authority in line with relevant guidance within agreed timescales.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education. It is vital that local authorities make judgements on a case-by-case basis. This may include children from the following vulnerable groups below (this list is not exhaustive):

- Pupils at risk of harm/neglect
- Children of Service Personnel
- Missing children and runaways
- Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice system
- Children of new migrant families
- Children of Gypsy, Roma Traveller families

[https://rotherhamscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/children\\_missing\\_education.pdf](https://rotherhamscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/children_missing_education.pdf)

## **Milton School will take these steps regarding CME**

As a school we understand that poor attendance can be an indicator of concern for children with welfare and safeguarding concerns, and thus ensures that a parent failing to inform the school that a child has an authorised absence could be cause for concern and the school will follow the 'First Day Absence (FDA)' procedure. Local Authority guidance may also be sought if required.

Milton School appreciates that the Local Authority has a Statutory Duty to ensure that all children and young people of compulsory school age receive suitable and appropriate education. School will support the Local Authority in ensuring that this duty is carried out effectively. There are specific duties in respect of Children Missing in Education (CME) and there are strict guidelines in respect of both the definition of CME and the legalities of deleting a pupil from a school roll.

School understands that it is essential that the Attendance Lead in conjunction with the DSL contact RMBC CME referral to inform them where any pupil has been absent for 10 consecutive days without a reason being provided for the absence.

In line with Rotherham Local Authority Children Missing Education guidance and Department for Education Children Missing Education guidance, Milton School will make reasonable enquiries to locate the child in line with the school's duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004.

Reasonable enquires to find the child include:

- Checking with all members of staff who the child/young person may have had contact with
- Checking with the pupil's friends, siblings, and known relatives
- Making telephone calls to any numbers held/identified including emergency contacts
- Sending a letter to the last known address
- Carrying out home visits at different times to check who is at the home address and other known addresses, and check with neighbours and known friends
- Asking for the address the family moving to
- Checking which school, a child is expected
- Requesting copies of flight information if appropriate

This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive and each in case should be considered on its individual merits ensuring all the facts of the case have been considered. Additional enquires, to those above may be necessary. If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, school will make a referral to Children's Social Care and, the police if appropriate.



## **First Day Absence – Procedure**

The below processes outline the action that school will undertake at specific stages of pupil absence.

### **Day 1**

- Parent/carers are expected to contact school by 0915 to give a reason why their child is not in school
- If a reason has not been provided by 0915 then Business Support Team will make the initial phone call home to seek a reason for the absence
- If possible, school will help pupils access their learning by collecting after a missed bus/taxi or if they are unwell, they are able to attend in the afternoon
- If an identified pupil with a history of missing school, the ATLAS team must be contacted ASAP.
- If there is no answer from the landline, mobile numbers or emergency contact numbers by midday, the relevant ATLAS member will conduct a home visit ideally within 24 hours but no later than 48 hours.
- A school calling card is to be left in the letter box with date/time/contact details of the visit
- A text, epraise, and/or email to be sent to any contacts, asking them to contact school.

### **Day 2 of any absence**

- Further phone call in the morning if the pupil has not returned to school
- Contact with any siblings' schools to check on attendance at school
- Another home visit at a different time by ATLAS team, leaving another calling card.
- A text, epraise, and/or email to be sent to any contacts, asking them to contact school.
- Liaison with external agencies or services if required

**This process will continue until the parent/carer has made contact with the school, or until the 10<sup>th</sup> day where the child will be reported to the Local Authority as CME. Milton School will then work with the Local Authority on the next steps to ascertain information about the pupil and/or family.**

**If a pupils attendance falls to 93% or if attendance approaches 5 unauthorised absences in a half term:**

- The Attendance Lead will call parents/carers to notify them of the potential impact that poor school attendance can have on a child's learning and progress
- ATLAS team will convene a meeting with parents/carers
- A consideration of a referral to Early Help and/or another support agency will be discussed

**If a pupils attendance falls below 90% :**

- **SLT** Attendance Lead will make a phone call home to parents reminding them of the attendance procedures in school and to offer further support
- This will be followed up with a letter with information discussed in the phone call
- A meeting will be arranged with parents/carer and pupils if appropriate and a support plan / targets will be agreed. Ensuring parents/carers are aware of the Local Authority Education Attendance procedures
- The plan to be actioned and monitored by ATLAS

**If a pupils absence reaches 10 unauthorised absences in a half-term ( 5 full days) then a meeting will be arrange and a referral to external agencies or support will be considered. An Early Help assessment will be strongly recommended at this stage if one is not already in place.**

[https://rotherhamscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/g\\_early\\_help.html](https://rotherhamscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/g_early_help.html)

## **COVID – 19**

Milton School will continue to follow local and national guidance in relation to pupils absence with COVID-19.

### Attendance codes:

Attendance	Codes
Present	/ = am \ = pm
Late arrival before the register has closed at 9.45am	L
Late arrival after the register has closed at 9.45am	U
Off Site supervised Educational activity approved by the school	B
Dual Registered - at another educational establishment e.g., pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.	D
At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment. E.g. interviews linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.	J
Participating in a supervised sporting activity which is approved or run by the school	P
Educational visit or trip	V
Work experience (Applicable for Y10 and Y11 Only)	W
Leave of absence authorised by the school	C
Excluded but no alternative provision made	E
Holiday authorised by the school	H

Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	<b>I</b>
Medical or dental appointments	<b>M</b>
Religious observance	<b>R</b>
Study leave - only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations	<b>S</b>
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence - should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.	<b>T</b>
Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the agreed period	<b>G</b>
Reason for absence not yet provided	<b>N</b>
Absent from school without authorisation - If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they should record it as unauthorised.	<b>O</b>
COVID-19 related absence.	<b>X</b>