

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2025/2026

GOVERNOR LEAD: Mrs Amanda Deeks

Next Review Date: September 2026

Aims and Objectives

At The Dean Academy we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, students, Gloucestershire County Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. **We expect students to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open. The school day is between 8.45am – 3.15pm and there are two sessions in each school day.**

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [School Attendance \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)
- [The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Information about Individual Students\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Contact the school before 8.45am on the first and each subsequent day of absence, to provide a reason while their child is not in school and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day between 8.45am and 3.15pm, arriving on time
- Attend every timetabled session and lesson on time

The Governing Body/Academy Trust Board are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual students or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across all schools in The Athelstan Trust

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Senior Attendance Champion Natalie Mehrotra-Hughes can be contacted on

01594 843202 and is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school

- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Communicating messages to students and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.

The School Education, Attendance and Welfare Officer Julie Stephens can be contacted on 01594 840912, jstephens@thedeanacademy.org is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data.
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Senior Attendance Champion and the Headteacher
- Collaborating with school staff e.g., Pastoral Lead/Home/School Liaison Officer/SENCo/Safeguarding Officer/Heads of Year/Tutors to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher, or other member of staff authorised by the Headteacher, when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Arrange and attend pre-prosecution Attendance Improvement Meetings with a member of SLT, setting targets and ensuring that these are followed through.
- Providing statutory return to Education, Inclusion Team, Gloucestershire County Council

The Class Teacher/Tutor is responsible for:

- Completing registers electronically during the first 15 minutes of tutor time and all lessons throughout the school day.
- Amending register to include students that arrive late to lesson, marking them with a L code and entering the number of minutes late
- Conducting attendance calls to parents as directed by the Attendance Champion or Education, Attendance and Welfare Officer
- Notifying the Attendance Team if a student is absent from class but has been marked present for the previous lesson.

The Attendance Team are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis
- Recording reasons for absence provided, contact person and method of communication onto the electronic registers and updating student's records using the correct attendance codes.
- Monitoring student lateness to school and sending texts to parents to advise of this.
- Ensuring all registers are sent within the first 15 minutes of tutor and lessons.
- Keeping an accurate record of all students arriving late to school or leaving early each day
- Liaising with parents regarding attendance concerns and offering support
- Liaising with Heads of Year and Pastoral Teams regarding attendance
- Updating registers of those students who are elsewhere in school with the appropriate codes.

- Contacting parents by telephone, texts, emails, home visits, and meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Working with other agencies to provide support for families to tackle absence.
- Our Home School Liaison Officer will complete home visit to support students who are struggling to attend
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Absent
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for six years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school before 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12.45pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

In exceptional circumstances (such as severe weather or public transport disruptions) the closing of registration may be delayed at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Absence

Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first and every day of absence by 8.45am or as soon as possible by contacting the school Attendance Office

Absences can be reported by:

- Attendance line: 01594 840912 (24-hour answer machine)
- Email: attendance@thedeanaacademy.org
- Text: 07943106814
- MyEd app

Parent/carers should state the student's name and tutor group, their name and the reason for absence.

School will mark absence due to illness as authorised, (Code I) unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, (Code O) and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

All students who arrive after the gates have closed must sign in at Reception.

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed at 9.15am will be marked as late (Code L) and the number of minutes entered into the register. If there is not a valid reason for lateness students will be given a Conduct point and a text will be sent to parents advising them of lateness.
- After the register has closed at 9.15am will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. If the student has a valid medical appointment and proof of this has been produced the absence will be coded as medical. (M) If there is no valid reason for lateness the student will be coded as unauthorised late (Code U).
- If a student has ten unauthorised session marks, either U or O (general unauthorised absence), in any ten-week period, the Headteacher will request the local authority to issue a Notice to Improve to parents/carers and/or a Penalty notice under the GCC/ National Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised, code M, provided the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides a copy of the medical appointment text/email/card/letter to the Attendance Office.
- However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. A full day's absence will not be authorised for one medical appointment, and students should be in school before and/or after the appointment.
- The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the

Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

- We define 'exceptional circumstances' as significant family events (e.g. parental wedding, funerals of close family members) or other unique unavoidable situations that go beyond regular occurrences.
- The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
- Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. Parents should complete the Request for Leave during Term Time form which can be found at [Request-for-Leave.pdf \(thedeacademy.org\)](#). The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.
- If a leave of absence is refused but you still take your child out of school for those days, the absence will be marked as unauthorised in the attendance register (Code G). The Headteacher may apply to the Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty notice for the absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (Code C1)
- Attending a medical or dental appointment (Code M)
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution (Code J1)
- Studying for a public examination (Code S)
- Compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable (Code C2)
- Exceptional circumstances (see definition above) (Code C)
- Parent travelling for occupational purposes – The student is a mobile child, and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business, and the student is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place (Code T)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart (Code R)
- Illness (Code I)

In the case of an extended absence due to ill health or other authorised circumstances parents will be given support by the school and, if necessary, referred to other agencies to facilitate the re-integration process. It is the responsibility of parents to be involved with this. This may include attending meetings in school. Parent/carers should contact the Attendance Team ahead of the absence so that all necessary information can be provided. Additional staff will then be advised as necessary to provide any additional support.

Procedures following unexplained absence.

Where any student we expect in school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, we will do the following to ensure the safeguarding of that child:

- Text the student's parent/carer as soon as possible on the morning of the unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If there is no response to this, or if there is regular absence a telephone call may be made to the parent/carer.
- A home visit by the school's Home/School Liaison Officer may also be made and a card left if no answer, asking for the parent/carer to contact school.
- If no response is received a further text will be sent.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than five working days after the missed session.
- Contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- If absence continues with no response the school will consider contacting the police to arrange a Welfare check.
- The Education Inclusion Team at Shire Hall will also be notified of the student's absence, if school are unable to make any contact and a Child Missing Education form will be submitted to them as necessary.
- If a student has a Social Worker or Youth Support Worker, they will be advised of the absence.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful or not engaged with a Notice to Improve can be applied for from the Local Authority and the potential escalation to a Penalty Notice should there be no improvement with attendance within the improvement period of up to six weeks.

Gloucestershire County Council attendance information can be found at [Attendance and absence from school | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Strategies for promoting attendance

As a school we reward outstanding attendance while challenging and supporting students whose attendance could be better. We support our students to aim for 100% attendance, and we promote, incentivize, and celebrate good attendance by:

- Sending text messages to parents/carers showing current attendance
- The Dean Academy staff liaise closely with Primary Schools regarding students transitioning to us. The Home School Liaison Officer may be in touch with parents during Term 6 if attendance at primary school was a problem.
- Building strong relationship with our students so they feel a sense of belonging in our school community.
- Using different methods to encourage attendance; for instance, explaining the links between attendance and outcomes.
- School work closely with parents of students that are struggling to attend through telephone calls, emails, texts and meetings.

Rewards

A variety of rewards are given to students who have 100% or improved attendance. These include:

- Students with a weekly attendance of 100% will be entered into a Lotto draw for a £5 Amazon voucher for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
- Cakes for Tutor groups where all students have 100% weekly attendance.
- Contact with home and achievements points awarded for each term of 100% or improved attendance.

Attendance Data Monitoring, Reporting and Analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance level. Text will be sent every term advising of the attendance percentage and this figure will also be included on student's twice-yearly reports.
- Send texts/emails home with students congratulating them if they have 100% attendance for a term.
- Where attendance is starting to be a concern, parents will be contacted by tutors, Heads of Year and letter/email.
- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual student level.
- Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

- As The Dean Academy is part of The Athelstan Trust our attendance data will be compared and analysed with other schools in the trust.
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence and then develop strategies to address these patterns.
- Each week the Education, Attendance and Welfare Officer reports to SLT, Heads of Years and Tutors with details of attendance for co-horts of students. This includes Tutor groups, Year Groups, SEND, Vulnerable groups. Weekly lates to school and lessons are monitored and shared, together with truancy to lessons.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies.
- SLT and HoY are advised daily of reasons for student's absence, lates and attendance totals

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with parents of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school. This may include Attendance Contracts and My Plan documentation under the graduated pathway.
- The school's Home/School Liaison Officer may visit the homes of students that are struggling to attend.
- Parents/carers are advised by letter/email when their child is a Persistent Absentee.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove barriers to attendance such as support from the Pastoral Support Team, Head of Year, School Counsellor, SEND Team.
- Referrals may be made to other external agencies such as School Counsellor, School Nurse, Early Help, Mental Health Teams etc. if it is agreed with the student and parents/carers that this may help the student or family.
- For students with an Educational Health Care Plan an attendance target may be included in the Plan to support this.
- The school will also collaborate closely with Social Workers, Youth Support Workers and/or Police if they are involved with students.
- In the case of further unauthorised absence, the Headteacher may call an Attendance Improvement meeting (AIM) with parents and students. This will be a formal meeting with a member of SLT and Education, Attendance and Welfare Officer where targets will be set and reviewed.
- A Notice to Improve may be issued by the local authority on behalf of the school which is a formal written warning that unless attendance significantly improves you will be issued with a penalty notice.
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Legal sanctions

The school must consider requesting Gloucestershire County Council to issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age and the national threshold has been met. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct: visit.

[gcc-pn-code-of-conduct.pdf](#) for further information.

If issued with a penalty notice fine for unauthorised leave of absence (Code G), general unauthorised (Code O) or unauthorised lates (Code U), or a combination of these each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of two penalty notices per child, per parent, can be

issued within a rolling three-year period (the second one being payable at £160 with no option to reduce fine by making payment earlier). If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within three years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

If excluded students are found in a public place, without a justifiable reason for being there, during a school day during the first five days of the exclusion, a fixed penalty notice will be applied for by the Headteacher. This will be for each parent, and the fine will be £60 if paid in the first 21 days, rising to £120 if paid by day 28. This is not subject to the three-year rolling rules.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) parent' means:

- **All natural parents, whether they are married or not.**
- **Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or student**
- **Any person who has care of a child or student, i.e., lives with and looks after the child.**

Links to other policies and monitoring arrangements

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
[Athelstan-Trust-Child-Protection-and-Safeguarding-Policy-July-2024.pdf](#)
- Behaviour policy
[Athelstan-Trust-Behaviour-Policy.pdf](#)

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum one year by Natalie Mehrotra-Hughes School's Attendance Champion. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.



Signed

Dated: 26/11/25

Amanda Deeks, Chair of Governors



Signed

Dated: 26/11/25

Hannah Rowlands, Headteacher