



Attendance Policy

January 2021

Next Review Due: January 2022

Co-ordinator – Mrs J McColl

Federation Schools Registration Times

Canon Pyon Academy

Morning registration: 8.45 am. Registers close at 9.00 am

Afternoon registration: 1.15 pm

School finishes: 3.15 pm

Kings Caple Primary Academy

Morning registration: 9.00 am. Registers close at 9.20 am

Afternoon registration: 1.00 pm

School finishes: 3.00 pm

Llangrove CE Academy

Morning registration: 8.55 am. Registers close at 9.10 am

Afternoon registration: 1.10 pm

School finishes: Reception and KS1 - 3.10 pm and KS2 - 3.15 pm

Lord Scudamore Academy

Doors open 8.40 am

Reception

Morning registration: 8.50 am

Afternoon registration: 1.15 pm

School finishes: 2.50 pm

Year 1 and Year 2

Morning registration: 8.50 am

Afternoon registration: 1.15 pm

School finishes: 3.05 pm

Year 3 ,4, 5 and 6

Morning registration: 8.50 am

Afternoon registration: 1.15 pm

School finishes: 3.10 pm

Registers close (all year groups): 9.20 am

Please note: Lord Scudamore closes at 12 noon on Fridays

Marden Primary Academy

Morning registration: 8.55 am. Registers close at 9.30 am

Afternoon registration: 1.15 pm

School finishes: 3.15 pm

Pencombe CE School

Morning registration: 8.55 am. Registers close at 9.30 am

Afternoon registration: 1.00 pm

School finishes: 3.30 pm

St Weonards Primary School

Morning registration: 9.00 am. Registers close at 9.30 am

Afternoon registration: 1.00pm

School finishes: 3.15 pm

Sutton Primary Academy

Morning registration: 8.45 am. Registers close at 9.30 am
Afternoon registration: 1.00 pm
School finishes: 3.05 pm

Background

1.1. Philosophy

- 1.1.1. At Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies, we promote a culture in which children enjoy coming to school. We are committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.
- 1.1.2. For a child to reach their full potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We consistently aim for maximum attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We aim to provide sensitive and appropriate guidance to parents and carers concerning pupil attendance, taking into account guidance from the Department for Education, which states:
- School attendance is subject to statutory laws and regulations.
 - The school should monitor its attendance figures and set targets accordingly.
 - The school should review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.
- 1.1.3. Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies has high expectations for attendance. Every child should attend every day that they are required to attend. Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies is committed to providing an education of the highest standard for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will pupils be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment and good progress depends on good attendance.

1.2. Statutory duty of schools

- 1.2.1. The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- 1.2.2. The Government expects that:
- Schools will promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence. Any attendance below 95% is a cause for concern (attendance that is consistently at 90% or below is classified as 'persistent absenteeism') and will be discussed with parents or carers as to how attendance can be improved.
 - Schools will ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence, by working in partnership with parents.
 - Parents and carers will perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age, who are registered at school, attend regularly in accordance with the school's home/school agreement.
 - All pupils will be punctual for their lessons.

1.3. Purpose of this document

- 1.3.1. Pupils, parents and carers, teaching staff, support staff and school governors have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this and the policies that underpin it.
- 1.3.2. The policy has been drawn up based on current Government and Local Authority guidance, and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the school community have access to this policy.

Responsibilities

2.1. School's responsibilities

- 2.1.1. Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies has a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.
- 2.1.2. The Head Teacher will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school.
- 2.1.3. The school will:
 - work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued;
 - send a clear message that if a pupil is absent the reason for the absence will be pursued;
 - work with all members of the school community, the school's learning mentor and the Local Authority in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy; and
 - encourage parents and carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance.
- 2.1.4. Regular information may be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues.

2.2. Parents' and carers' responsibilities

- 2.2.1. Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly.
- 2.2.2. The school expects that parents and carers will ensure that:
 - their children attend school regularly and punctually;
 - pupils report to the school office if they are late;
 - they support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
 - they contact school on every day of absence or give the duration of the absence if known in advance;
 - their children arrive at school on time and are collected on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day; and
 - they work in partnership with the school, for example, by attending parents' meetings and consultations, taking an interest in their children's work and

- activities; and
- contact the school immediately if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives.

2.3. Pupils' responsibilities

- 2.3.1. All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly they should speak to their class teacher or learning mentor.
- 2.3.2. Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. Pupils also have a responsibility for reporting to the school office if they arrive late.

2.4. Governors' responsibilities

- 2.4.1. The Governing Body will oversee, support and challenge the leadership team in ensuring excellent attendance with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils at the school.

Recording attendance

3.1. Registration

- 3.1.1. The Federation's schools' registration times are listed on pages 2 and 3 of this document. Pupils arriving after registration time will be recorded as L for late before the register closes and must enter school via the main reception area, where the reason for lateness will be recorded. The class registers will remain open until their school's listed time and any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as U for late after the register closed. This is considered an unauthorised absence. Parents or carers will be asked to explain persistent lateness and asked to remedy the cause.
- 3.1.2. If a pupil is unfit for school, parents or carers are asked to contact the school on each day of absence by 9.00 am. If a pupil is absent at morning registration and the school has not received an explanation by the close of registration, the office staff will be informed and will contact the parents or carers to establish the reason for the absence.
- 3.1.3. In cases where the absence at registration is due to an early morning medical appointment, the absence will be recorded as authorised as long as prior notification has been received.
- 3.1.4. A written explanation may be sent in for absences. Parents will be notified in writing if the absences are unauthorised and should follow point 3.4 when requesting absence for leave in term time.
- 3.1.5. The school should follow up any absences to:
- ascertain the reason;
 - ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
 - identify whether the absence is approved or not; and
- identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

3.2. Absence from school

- 3.2.1. At Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies we recognise the clear links between

attendance and progress and attendance and safeguarding children. Pupil's attendance rates will be monitored on a weekly basis.

- 3.2.2. If there is a problem with a pupil's attendance, the parents or carers will be informed in writing of the school's concerns and will be encouraged to keep absences to a minimum. The attendance of these pupils will be monitored by the school and if no improvement is noted a further letter will be sent, again expressing concern and offering support. The school will always work with parents and carers and pupils to try to remedy the problem.
- 3.2.3. At registration each morning and afternoon, any child who is not present will be marked as an "unauthorised absence" (n code) by the class teacher, unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment or correction is distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Head Teacher. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.
- 3.2.4. Absence from school may be authorised in the following circumstances;
- If a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority.
 - If a pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion.
 - In exceptional circumstances where the parents or carers have sought permission in advance.
 - Where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend (with medical evidence to support the absence) although persistent illness without medical evidence may not be authorised.
 - Where the pupil has a medical appointment. Parents should however be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards, or send them to school beforehand.
 - The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong (evidence may be requested).
 - In other exceptional circumstances, such as a family bereavement, and for a very limited period.

3.3. Illness

- 3.3.1. Where illness is of a concern, parents and carers will be asked to grant permission for the school to consult the medical practitioner concerned. In cases of recurring absences through illness parents may be asked to produce a medical certificate or supporting evidence. We like to work in partnership with families and would like to offer support via GP consent or the school nursing service.
- 3.3.2. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, the school can request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. The school can record the absence as unauthorised if it is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions or appointment cards

3.4. Exceptional circumstances

- 3.4.1. If absence is required in exceptional circumstances parents or carers must apply in writing to

the Head Teacher for permission for that absence. This must be done in advance of the planned absence and include the reasons for absence. The Head Teacher will inform the parents or carers of the decision in writing.

- 3.4.2. Authorised absence will only be granted where the correct procedures have been followed and the permission given. It will not be granted retrospectively and remains at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

3.5. Holidays

- 3.5.1. Holidays should not be taken in term time. Absence for leave in term time may only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. The application for leave must be made in advance and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that there are truly exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Head Teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school.
- 3.5.2. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion. If the Head Teacher does not authorise the absence and parents or carers still choose to go on holiday this will then be deemed unauthorised absence. As a result a referral may be submitted to Herefordshire Council, who may initiate legal proceedings.

3.6. A welcome back

- 3.6.1. At Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies, we promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence. It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Unauthorised absence

4.1. Next steps

- 4.1.1. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents or carers. If this is unsuccessful and the problem appears to be a medical one, the school may liaise with the school health adviser. In other cases the school will work with the family and agree strategies to help overcome attendance and late issues.
- 4.1.2. If there continues to be unauthorised absences the matter may be referred to Herefordshire Council, who may consider legal proceedings.

4.2. Penalty notices

- 4.2.1. Penalty notices or legal proceedings can only be instigated by Herefordshire Council. They are seen as a last resort after all avenues of support have been exhausted and can be used where the pupil's frequent or prolonged absence has not been authorised by the school.
- 4.2.2. A penalty notice is a fine imposed on the parents or carers. The penalty is £60 per child, per parent, if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 per child, per parent if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.
- 4.2.3. There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period, the Local Authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies, or withdraw the notice. Parents can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made.

4.3. Children missing in education

- 4.3.1. When pupils leave the school and no information has been received by the school regarding their new placement and parents/carers are unable to be contacted, the school has a duty of care regarding safeguarding and must contact the Local Authority. The child will be considered to be a **Child Missing in Education**. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to investigate, which will include liaising with Social Services, the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate the child. By giving the school details of the child's new school and location, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Attendance policy: coronavirus addendum



1. Aims and scope

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents/carers and pupils who are concerned about the return to school due to coronavirus

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020 until the end of the 2020/21 academic year. It sets out changes to our normal attendance policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal attendance policy continues to apply.

School opening hours may be changed under measures implemented during the pandemic. Individual schools will ensure that no changes are made to teaching time and will publish their temporary opening hours to parents.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and pupils.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) [guidance](#) on school attendance during the 2020/21 academic year.

In section 4.2 of this addendum, where we refer to 'close contact', this means:

- Direct close contacts: face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- Proximity contacts: extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

This definition is from the DfE's [guidance on full reopening for schools](#)

3. Attendance expectations

It is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age to attend school unless:

- They have been granted an authorised absence by the school in line with our normal attendance policy
- They cannot attend school due to specific circumstances related to coronavirus (see section 4, below)

4. Where 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' applies

We will only accept 'non-attendance in relation to coronavirus' in circumstances where a pupil's travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- Against guidance from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission
- Prohibited by any legislation or statutory directions relating to the incidence of transmission of coronavirus

4.1 Pupil develops symptoms or lives with someone who does

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self-isolate. The pupil will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test results.

If the pupil's test result is negative: the pupil will return to school when they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus. They should continue to stay at home if they remain unwell (i.e. with a different illness). We will ask for a copy of the child's test result before they can return to school.

If the person the pupil lives with tests negative: the pupil will stop self-isolating and return to school

4.2 Pupil or a 'close contact' of theirs receives a positive test result

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible.

Pupils who test positive must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, and must only return to school when they no longer have symptoms (other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste).

If a member of the pupil's household or a 'close contact' tests positive, the pupil must self-isolate for 10 days. The pupil must do this from when the member of their household first had symptoms, or the day the pupil last met with the 'close contact' who received the positive result.

See the definition for 'close contact' in section 2 of this addendum.

4.3. Pupil has to quarantine after travel abroad

The parent/carer must notify the school if their child has to quarantine after travel to a country that is not on the government's [exemptions list](#).

The pupil must quarantine for 10 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

4.4 Pupil is required to shield during a local lockdown

The parent/carer will notify the school if they are advised by the government to stay at home and will provide proof of their shielding letter by forwarding it to the school email address.

The pupil will stay at home until the shielding measures in the local area are paused. Once the shielding measures are lifted, we will contact the pupil's parent/carer to set the expectation that they can return to school.

4.5 Remote learning provision

If a pupil is not attending school because of circumstances related to coronavirus, but where the pupil is not ill, the school will provide the pupil access to remote education.

5. Recording attendance

We will take our attendance register at the start of the school day and again at the start of the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances'
- Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

Pupils must arrive in school at their designated time slot on each school day.

6. Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer by telephoning
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

If a pupil does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carers are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we will arrange a phone call/in-school appointment between the parent/carers and a member of the SLT to explain the protective measures the school is taking to keep pupils safe.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 2 months during term time.

Appendix 1: pupil absence codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's addendum to their school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year. If not covered here, our normal attendance codes apply.

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|------|---|--|
| X | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who does, and are waiting for their test results |
| I | Illness | Pupil remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness) |
| I | Illness | Pupil has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive |
| X | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to self-isolate (for 10 days) because someone they live with tested positive |
| X | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to self-isolate (for 10 days) because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive |
| X | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to quarantine (for 10 days) after a trip to a non-exempt country |
| X | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil is required to shield in the case of a local lockdown, or lives with someone who is required to shield |
| X | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil is asked not to attend in the case of local lockdown |