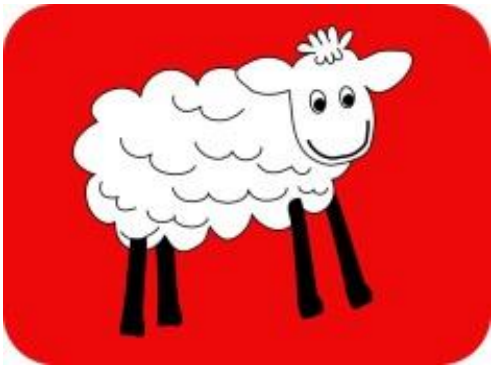


Sheepy Magna Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy

Headteacher: Alison Field

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Chair of Governors: David Wright

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Last Reviewed – February 2025

Next Review Date – February 2027

Statement of Intent
Sheepy Magna C of E Primary School aims to work together with parents in order to ensure the achievement of high levels of attendance and punctuality for all pupils.

The School and its staff regard the regular attendance of children at school as being vital to each child's education and development. It is for this reason that non attendances (however short or infrequent) are treated seriously. It remains the policy of the school to only sanction nonattendance during term time in exceptional circumstances. If your child has unauthorised leave of absence you may either be issued with a Penalty Notice of £120 per parent per child (discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days), or, your case could be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court for the purposes of a criminal prosecution.

Rights, Responsibilities and Roles
The School
School staff are expected to set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness, Sheepy School works closely with parents particularly if attendance or punctuality gives cause for concern. The school will ensure that absence and punctuality data will be reported regularly.

The school aims for all its students to have 100% attendance and regards good attendance to be 96% or above with no unauthorised absences. It is for this reason that non attendances (however short or infrequent) are treated seriously.

Pupils
Pupils will ensure that they get to their classrooms and lessons punctually.

Parents
Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. Parents are also responsible for immediately informing school of the reason for any absence by phone call or text message on the first morning of any absence. It is expected that parents do not arrange family holidays during term time.

Parents can expect the school to keep them fully informed of their child's attendance / punctuality record through reports and notifications.

Registration
Registration is taken twice daily, by the class teacher's, first thing in the morning and after lunch. The registers are collected and then returned by a child afterwards. A lunchtime register is taken in the morning which the school uses to ensure the correct hot dinner numbers are passed onto the kitchen. The staff mark in a diagonal line '/' for a hot dinner, an 'S' for sandwich lunch.

Our register times are:

Morning Open – 8.40am Morning Close – 9.10am
Register is also taken at 1pm each afternoon.

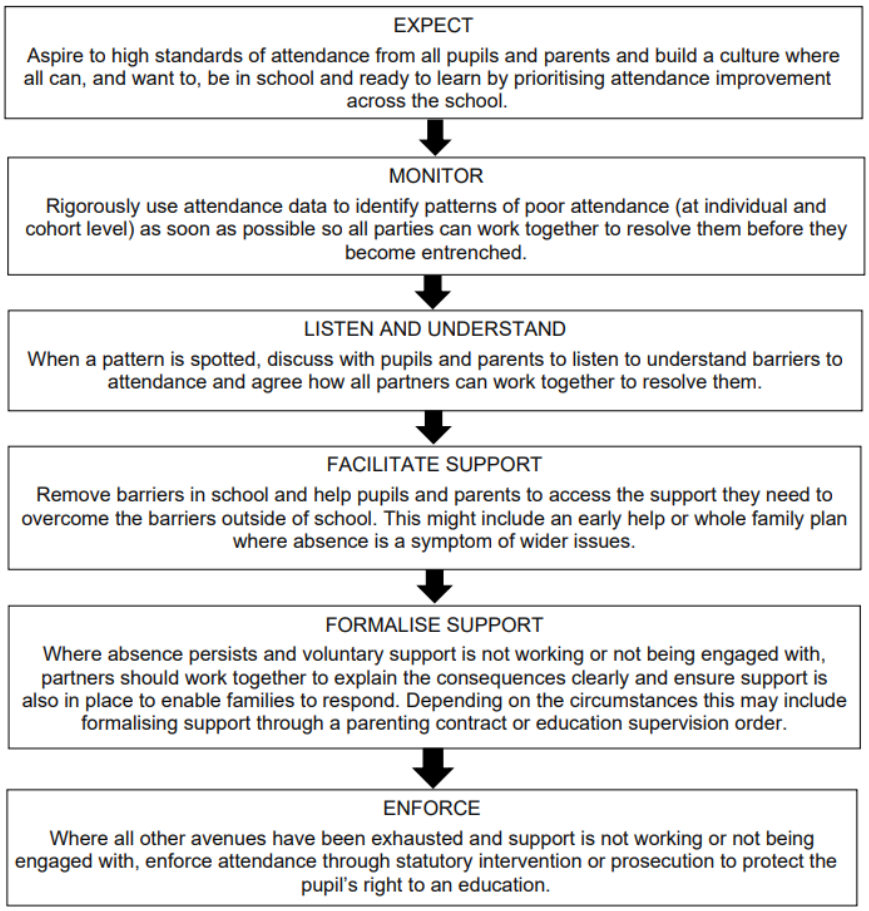
Each child is called by their preferred name at register time and they are expected to answer 'Good Morning' and 'Good Afternoon' alongside their teacher's name.

The class teacher will inform the Headteacher should there be any concern over a child's absence as soon as they can.

If a child is late they will have to come into school via the office entrance (the gate will be locked between 8.45 and 8.50am) and they will be greeted by a member of the office staff. If the register for their class has not been returned the child will go straight through to their classrooms. If the register for their class has been returned to the office an 'L' will be added into the register and a school late will be recorded. If the child comes into school once the register has closed an official late mark will be issued. This will be reported to the Local Authority through our data returns.

Children who are persistently late through no fault of their own are not made to feel anxious about it, they are encouraged to go straight into class and an explanation is asked of the parent dropping them off, these children are sometimes not aware that there is a concern about their punctuality. The parents of these children have explained to them the importance of getting to school on time, they are told that it is important for their child's confidence to be entering the class at the same time as the rest of their peers and that register time is an important part of the day; a settling down time and being persistently late can upset not only the child itself but also the other children in the class.

From 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' May 2022:



Authorised and Unauthorised Absence
It is the school who decides whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. All requests for leave of absence must be explained in writing by a parent. The school will then decide whether or not it will authorise the absence. The school adheres to the guidelines set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013.

Absence from school may be **authorised** if it is for the following reasons:

- sickness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- days of religious observance (limited)
- exceptional family circumstances.

Parents are asked to make dental and medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.

Absence from school will be **unauthorised** for:

- holidays during term time
- shopping
- looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents
- birthdays
- any family circumstance not deemed to be exceptional.

Parents are asked **not** to book family holidays during term time. Parents do not have any entitlement to take their child out of school for such holidays. All requests for leave of absence are discussed between senior leaders in school. Where the request is not agreed, the absence with be unauthorised. The case may then be passed to the Attendance Team and parents will potentially be issued with a Penalty Notice of£80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.

Procedures for Following up Absence/Lateness
Parents are requested to inform the school of their child's absence on the morning they are away by telephone, text message or in person; they may also provide a written explanation on return. The written explanation will be kept in the child's personal folder in the office. If parents do not contact the school, then a text message will be sent or a phone call made to ascertain the reason for absence.

When a pupil is persistently late or absent without good reason and the school's efforts to effect improvement have been unsuccessful, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Attendance Team. This will also be the case if a request is made for a leave of absence that has been unauthorised absence is taken.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance/Punctuality
In the belief that all pupils are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is lively and meets their needs, the curriculum at Sheepy School will be regularly reviewed and the curriculum will be monitored and developed to meet the needs of all pupils.

Attendance and punctuality percentages are added to each pupil's summer term report. Pupil's attendance is analysed at least termly. If a child's attendance falls below 90% then the child will be closely monitored and a letter sent to parents. If there is no improvement then the matter will be referred to an Attendance Team. It is the school's ambition that all pupils attend for at least **96%** of the year.

Termly reports are made to the Governing Body on attendance and punctuality through the Headteacher's Report and attendance targets are set with the Governing Body and the Headteacher for the whole school on an annual basis.

Pupils who have been absent for any extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually-tailored programme. All issues which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties are to be promptly investigated by the Headteacher.

Collection of Attendance Data

Each term the following data will be collected and analysed in order to assess performance and trends:

- whole school attendance rates;
- numbers and proportion of persistent absentee pupils;
- rates of unauthorised absence;
- attendance/absence rates for particular cohorts and groups (year groups, gender, ethnicity, SEN, etc)

Pupil-level attendance data will be analysed on a termly basis in order to identify persistent absentees and those pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees.

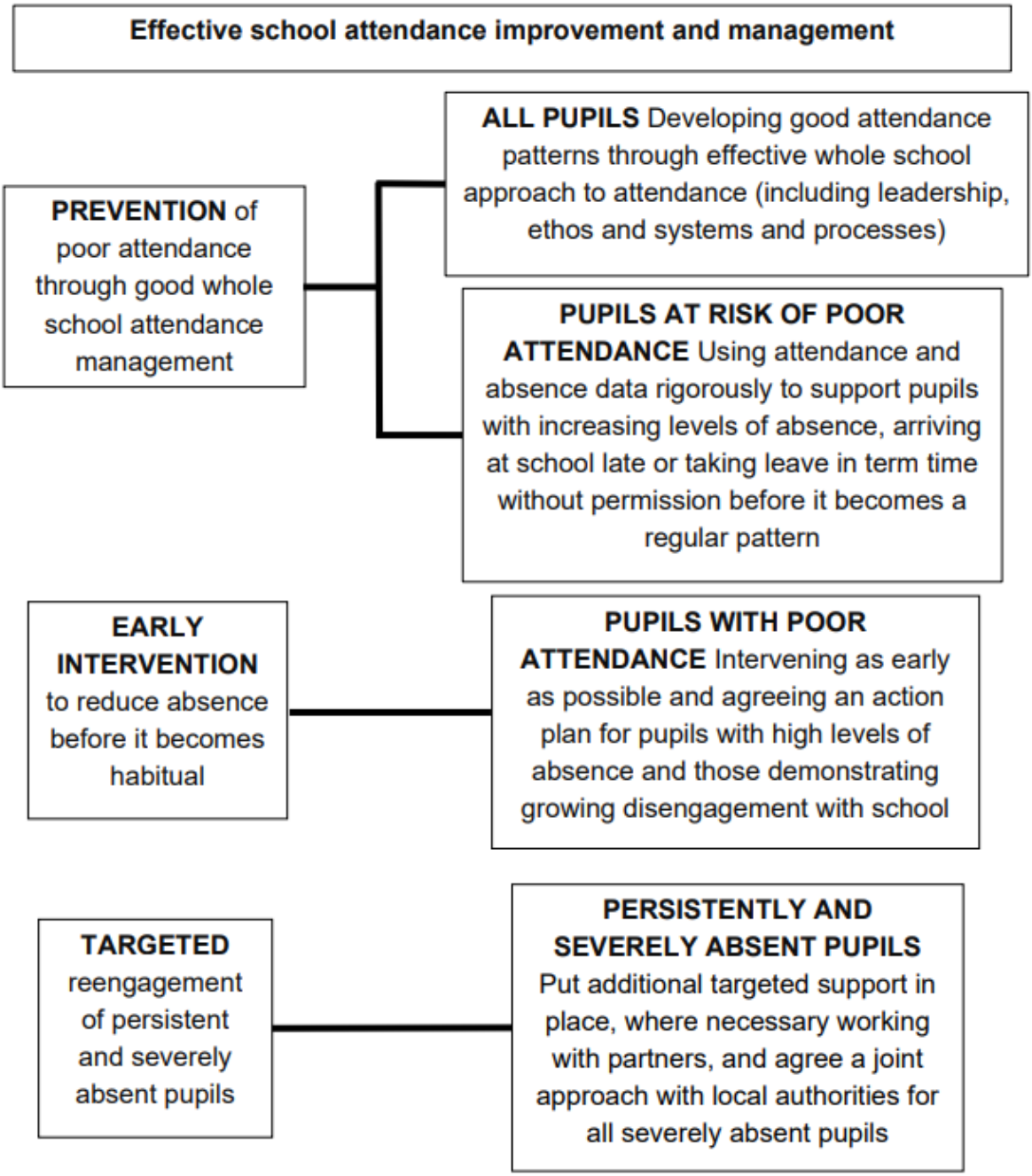
Promotion of this Policy

The Attendance Policy is available to all parents on request. Staff are told of its whereabouts (school policy folder in the office) and the contents summarised and shared through staff meetings and INSET days.

The Headteacher is responsible for the monitoring of this policy and it will be formally reviewed biannually by the full Governing Body but updated and monitored on a more regular basis by the Senior Leadership Team.

LCC Code of Conduct
https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/attendance-team-code-of-conduct.pdf

LCC Attendance Team Guidance
https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/resource/files/2023-02/LCC-Attendance-Team-Guidance.pdf


Effective school attendance improvement and management
PREVENTION of poor attendance through good whole school attendance management
ALL PUPILS Developing good attendance patterns through effective whole school approach to attendance (including leadership, ethos and systems and processes)
PUPILS AT RISK OF POOR ATTENDANCE Using attendance and absence data rigorously to support pupils with increasing levels of absence, arriving at school late or taking leave in term time without permission before it becomes a regular pattern
EARLY INTERVENTION to reduce absence before it becomes habitual
PUPILS WITH POOR ATTENDANCE Intervening as early as possible and agreeing an action plan for pupils with high levels of absence and those demonstrating growing disengagement with school
TARGETED reengagement of persistent and severely absent pupils
PERSISTENTLY AND SEVERELY ABSENT PUPILS Put additional targeted support in place, where necessary working with partners, and agree a joint approach with local authorities for all severely absent pupils

Letter Templates

Authorised letter

Dear Parent,

Re: Child Name: xxx **DOB:** xxx

This letter is for your information so you do not need to take any action.

I would like to thank you for following the school procedure regarding attendance by informing us of up-coming absences.

Please see below for our school decisions:

Date	Reason for request	Outcome
16.2.2023 (pm)	Medical appointment	Authorised
27.2.2023 (pm)	Medical appointment	Authorised
6.3.2023 (pm)	Exceptional circumstance	Authorised

Current attendance figures are:

Xxx

Xxx

Please continue to work with us. You are more than welcome to contact us to discuss any queries or concerns you may have.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. Good attendance enables students to keep up with the work required.

Yours Sincerely

Letter Templates

Low attendance (90- 94%)

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Child Name: xxx **DOB**: xxx

I am writing regarding your child's **attendance**, which is causing concern. Please see the attached attendance certificate.

It is our ambition that all our pupils to attend between 96% - 100% of the year. 90% attendance equates to half a day a week or 19 full days missed in a year.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. The number of days they have **missed** means it is more difficult for them to achieve in their learning and more likely that they will have significant gaps in their knowledge.

We will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I thank you for your urgent attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely

Template letters

Low attendance concern (<90%)

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: **Name:** xxx **Dob:** xxx

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to «percentage_attendance»% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance. Support can be offered through an Early Help Assessment. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Letter Templates
Late

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Child Name: xxx **DOB:** xxx

I have noted during a recent attendance review that your child is beginning to show a pattern of persistent lateness.

We open the gate at 8.40am each morning and close it at 8.45am, most children are in class by this point and have begun working on activities and getting ready to learn. Children can be distressed by having to walk into a classroom full of pupils already engaged in activity and not be sure of what they are meant to be doing.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

Please note that if your child arrives after registers close this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Yours sincerely

Letter Templates

Suspected term-time leave

Date

Name and Address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Child Name: xxx **DOB:** xxx

I am writing about «forename»'s absence from school from <<date>> to <<date>>.

From information received from other sources we believe that this was due to term time leave.

We would be grateful if you could confirm the reason for the absence within 7 days of the date of this letter so this period can be recorded appropriately on the attendance register. However, if the absence was not due to exceptional circumstances but due to illness, please provide medical information to support this.

If we do not hear from you within the next 7 days, «forename»'s absence will be recorded as an unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised absences are recorded, a Penalty Notice Fine can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely

Letter Templates

Declined Term-time leave

Date

Name and Address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Child Name: xxx **DOB:** xxx

Thank you for requesting term-time leave, following our school protocol. This request has been considered by our Leadership Team.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 was amended in

September 2013. The amendments made clear that Head teachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional circumstances' exist.

We have considered your application carefully and the reasons for the absence you have highlighted, however on this occasion we do not believe that the explanation provided can be justified as "exceptional circumstances".

Should you still decide to continue to take your child out of school during term time, then please note that the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised absences are recorded, a Penalty Notice Fine can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. **The amount of the penalty is £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid within 28 days.** Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely