



Attendance information

‘Raise your child’s attendance, raise their chances!’

At Sherard Primary School excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every student. Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and parents/carers have a vital role in promoting good attitudes towards attendance. We ask for support from parents/carers to ensure that their children are present at every opportunity, to arrive on time and to avoid allowing children to stay at home unnecessarily or taking them out of school without authorisation.

Evidence shows that students who attend school regularly make better progress both academically and socially. We monitor student’s attendance closely and will follow up unexplained absences with parents/carers, by text, telephone and/or by letter. Where a student’s attendance record reaches a concerning level, we will contact parents/carers to discuss ways in which the school can support you and your child. Our school attendance target of 96% is the minimum that we expect for all students. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive effect on students and their futures.

Punctuality and Registration



- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session.
- Children are expected to arrive by **8.55am** in order to be ready for the start of the first lesson. Registers are taken at 9.00am in the morning and will close at 9.10am.
- If a child arrives after 9.00am, children will be marked as late using L code (before register closes).
- If a child arrives after 9.10am children will be marked as late using U code (after the register closes). U code is classed as **unauthorised absence**.
- All children who arrive after **8.55am** will need to come into school via the school Office with their parents in order to ensure we log them in and record dinners. Parents will be asked to sign the late book indicating reason for lateness.

- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes.
- Some of the timings above may differ for pupils who arrive on SEN transport.

Persistent Absence

Persistent Absence is a serious problem for students. Much of the work children miss when they are off school is never made up, leaving these students at a considerable

disadvantage. A student defined as a 'Persistent Absentee' is one who misses 10% or more of school. Schools are challenged by the Government to address the problem of persistent absenteeism. The government has strengthened schools' ability to respond by increasing Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) to £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days.

What to do if your child is ill:

If your child is too ill to attend school, parents/carers should contact the school Office by 8.40am by telephone on 01664 565124. The telephone system allows callers to leave a message 24 hours a day. Alternatively, you can inform us via the School Gateway app and send a message direct to the office. **Please do not send messages to the teachers on Dojo about absence**, these must come to the office in the first instance. Please give your child's name, Class, the reason for the absence, and how long you expect the absence to last. We ask that you contact us each day that your child is absent unless you have given us an indication of how long the absence will last.

What to do if your child has an appointment:

We ask that you make routine medical and other appointments out of school time, where possible. If this is not possible, we require notification in advance. Please telephone or provide a note from home or appointment letter/card to confirm the appointment. In most cases, your child should attend school before the appointment and return to school afterwards wherever possible.

Automated texts to parents/carers:

We take our safeguarding responsibility seriously and texts are made daily to the contact numbers of parents/carers if a student is absent, where the Office has received no reason for absence. Texts are made on a daily basis, even where your child has been absent due to illness on previous days. We cannot assume that your child is still ill unless you have notified us. This process forms part of our safeguarding policy. NOTE: Texts are made via Gateway, they can arrive as a text or through the app if you have the app on your phone. Please ensure that you have notifications turned on. Parents/carers can also help by ensuring that we hold up to date contact numbers.

Leave of Absence (including term-time holidays)

Amendments came into force in September 2013 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 now state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

There is a common misconception that any child is allowed to take 10 days' holiday per year. This is not true. The government strongly urges parents/carers to avoid taking their children out of school for family holidays as this will disrupt their education.

Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as shopping for uniform, birthdays, day trips, weekends away etc. **Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence.** Parents/carers should make any request well in advance and in writing. Requests for absence for reasons such as compassionate leave, special family events, sporting or musical competitions, etc., should be made in the same way. All requests are considered individually, taking into account the circumstances of the request. Other factors will be considered, such as:

- the time of year the student will be absent
- the attendance record of the student
- the number of previous requests for leave of absence
- the student's ability to catch up

Parents will be notified of the decision either by telephone or in an email. Where a parental request has been refused, and parents continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act

2003. This is a fine of £60 per parent for each child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per parent for each child if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay can result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Support for Attendance

We monitor students' attendance and punctuality very closely. We follow up unexplained absence with parents/carers by telephone and/ or by an email. Where a student's attendance reaches a concerning level, we will contact you to discuss ways in which we can work together to support you and your child. We may invite you to a meeting in school to discuss your child's attendance and how the school can support you to improve this.

Legal Sanctions

Parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure their child attends school regularly. The school can make a referral to the local authority where parents/carers are failing in their legal duty. The local authority has the power to enforce school attendance where this becomes problematic, including the power to prosecute parents/carers who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. If found guilty parents/ carers could be fined up to £2500 and/ or imprisoned for 3 months.

Penalty notices are fines of £60 and £120 if paid between 12 and 28 days. They are an alternative to prosecution of parents for failing to ensure their child attends school regularly.