

Children's Services  
**Admissions and Access to Education Service**

**REGISTER-KEEPING**

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1. The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 provide statutory regulations for schools relating to maintenance and upkeep of admissions and attendance registers.
2. The Department for Education (DfE) advises that schools are legally required to record in the attendance register once at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon whether the pupil is present, absent, engaged in an approved supervised educational activity off-site, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances as defined in regulation 6(5). If a child of compulsory school-age pupil is absent, the register should indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. It must also record the nature of any approved, supervised educational activities.
3. The law specifies that the school must allow the Local Authority access to inspect school registers. the designated Attendance Officer carries out this duty. Outlined below is guidance for register-keeping that additionally provides details of the aspects that will be covered in an inspection.

**Guidance for register- keeping and inspections**

1. Daily registers and Official Registers, should be stored electronically and available for inspection. It is important to note that Official Registers can be subject to inspection by Ofsted and also be used as evidence, if required, in legal proceedings.
2. Names, dates of birth and addresses of children should be clearly recorded and available at the time of inspection. The information can be viewed/printed on Registration Certificates. Paper records should also be held in case of emergency evacuations.
3. The totals of unauthorised and authorised absence for each half term should be kept in the Official Register. This information can be used for any required absence returns as well as providing data required for analysis.
4. It is a legal requirement, as well as having a health and safety component, that daily registers should be completed up to and including the day of inspection. Morning and afternoon sessions should be recorded each day. It is wholly unacceptable for registers to be completed in advance.
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence and lateness codes should be correctly used and supported where necessary with additional commentary. Additional commentary can be entered into School Information Management System (SIMS) or equivalent to accompany the absence code. Correspondence can be stored electronically either in SIMS or on the School Network in a clearly identifiable location. Paper correspondence can be held on Pupil's manual file. In terms of lateness, comments and/or minutes late can be entered in SIMS to accompany the Late Code.

6. Evidence of action taken by school staff regarding unauthorised absence needs to be recorded. As noted above, comments can be entered in SIMS to accompany the absence code and correspondence can be stored electronically either in SIMS or on the School Network in a clearly identifiable location. Paper correspondence can be held on an individual pupil's manual file.
7. Systems need to be in place for a school to identify pupils falling into DfE category of 'persistent absence'. SIMS Attendance reports should be run each week once all attendance marks have been recorded, using all correct absence codes.
8. All schools have a responsibility to ensure that they have robust IT back-ups in place. This covers both SIMS and any documents on the network. SMS offer advice on back-up solutions. Any further advice on SIMS should be directed to 3BM or your service provider.

### **Removal of Children from the School Roll**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006s8 (2f) specify the circumstances when a pupil can be legally removed from the admissions/attendance register. Unlawful deletions from admissions/attendance register can lead to children missing education as well as vital safeguarding implications. The Z code should be used when a child's name has been removed from the school roll. Inspections by the Local Authority and Ofsted will pay particular attention to children who have been removed from a school roll.

### **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR ANALYSING ATTENDANCE DATA AND STARTING APPROPRIATE ACTION**

1. It is the responsibility of school staff to have systems in place for regularly analysing school attendance data and starting appropriate action to ensure that both individual and overall school attendance is maintained to a satisfactory level. SIMS would be used to undertake this work.
2. The school attendance lead should explore ways which the SIMS can be used to better understand a school's attendance profile, to ensure appropriate, timely action is taken. The information can be used to tackle both individual school attendance, group and school overall attendance. The reports can be produced to look at attendance data on individual pupils as well as analysing particular year groups, classes or forms. SIMS can also provide a group analysis based upon categories of attendance codes being used.
3. Ideally attendance data needs to be analysed weekly to swiftly identify trends and patterns of attendance. A recommendation for good practice would be for this to be done weekly to provide an ongoing analysis of attendance to ensure prompt appropriate action is taken about the attendance of individuals, and also to target particular groups of children e.g. classes, year groups etc..
4. School strategies should be employed to tackle an individual pupil's attendance percentage: telephone contact, letters home, meetings, contracts and setting individual attendance targets. SUPPORTING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE – PLAN OF ACTION provides suggested timescale for appropriate action.

5. Consideration of a request for support from Early Help Services in relation to school attendance should be made in response to attendance percentage below 90% over a 6-week period that has not been improved by school strategies.
6. There will be cases where the timing of a request for support for school attendance should be considered, for instance, if an attendance percentage below 90% has started to improve towards the end of a 6-week period (e.g. child has returned to school following a 2-week or 3-week unauthorised holiday in term-time). Logically the period for monitoring should be further extended to take this into consideration, before requesting support for attendance. School staff may also want to consider an earlier referral if the child has more complex needs.
7. Whether or not an absence is authorised is the decision of *school staff*, not parents/carers. School staff should be mindful of not authorising regular or prolonged periods of authorised absence unless it is medically substantiated, and parent/carers should be informed of the decision not to authorise future absences.
8. In terms of regular or prolonged medically-substantiated absence, consideration needs to be given to the child's suitability for mainstream educational provision on health grounds. Consideration can be given to a referral for alternative provision being made on health grounds.
9. The information provided is guidance only and any further queries should be addressed to the LAs Attendance Officer.