

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date prepared: August 2023

Date Approved by Full Governing Body Committee: September 2023

Date of Next review: August 2026

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence

Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

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

Please see Appendix 2 which is an addendum to this policy and sets out our response to a pandemic/COVID-19 with regards to students' attendance.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for attendance registers during COVID-19.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

(See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.)

- Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55 and will be kept open until 9.05 The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.05pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents can notify the school of their child's absence by leaving a message on the answer phone, by calling in to the office in person or via the school app.

Absence due to illness will be authorised 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 parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, 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 and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents can notify the school of a planned appointment absence by leaving a voicemail message, calling into the school office in person or by using the school app.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

If a pupil has been registered as late on more than 5 occasions then the Headteacher will notify the parent by writing and requesting a meeting with the parents to ascertain what support can be given to ensure the child arrives to school on time.

Lateness and punctuality is reported to both the Behavior, Pastoral and safeguarding committee and to the Governing Body.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences within 5 days of occurrence to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. The school will follow up

3.6 Reporting to parents

The school will report to parents on their child's attendance record annually in the written end of year report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Please refer to Appendix 2 for authorised and unauthorised absence during COVID-19.

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as a bereavement, serious family illness.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' and The religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Unauthorised absence

- The school will not authorise any term time leave of absence due to a family holiday.
- If a pupil has unauthorised attendance on more than 5 occasions then the Headteacher will notify the parent by writing and requesting a meeting with them to ascertain what support can be given to ensure the child attendance improves.
- The school will monitor attendance levels of any child causing concern.
- The Headteacher reserves the right to use discretion in all cases of holiday requests.

4.2 Flexi-schooling requests

Flexi-schooling is usually considered a legal option for parents, but the headteacher at the school must agree to it. Such requirements or concerns the headteacher might voice could include:

- Whether or not the child has met a specific attendance requirement.
- Whether the child is due to take his or her SAT's or any standard Government related test.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year which amount to more than 5 days being missed from school.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays exceeding 5 days absence or more taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
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If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

- The school actively encourages good attendance from all children. Should there be an issue with a child's attendance then the school will communicate as early as possible with the family concerned.
- The school will actively acknowledge any positive improvement in a child's attendance level.
- The school will acknowledge any child who achieves 100% attendance in any term through an attendance assembly and the awarding of an attendance certificate.
- If any child achieves 100% attendance for the whole of any academic year then they will be rewarded with a 100% attendance pin badge and a special certificate.

6. Attendance monitoring

Please refer to Appendix 2 for attendance monitoring during a pandemic/COVID-19.

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Once parents have notified the school of their child's absence on day one of the illness, it is not necessary to call the school each day.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school uses all internally collected attendance data to track the attendance of individual pupils, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing Body

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The school attendance data is reported to the Governing body at every Governing body meeting. This data is a detailed breakdown from the Headteacher of attendance all across the school by Gender, Deprivation, SEN, Pupil Premium and ELA. The school attendance is also reported to the Behavior, Safeguarding and Pastoral Committee as and when the committee meets.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Chair of Governors
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Governing Body when a fixed-penalty notice has been issued

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office/reception staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and The Behaviour, Safeguarding and Pastoral Committee. At every annual review, the policy will be shared with the Governing board at the next available meeting after completion of the attendance data.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2 – Addendum to the Attendance Policy during COVID19 Pandemic local or national lockdown

All of the procedures laid out in this policy above remain unless specifically mentioned below.

Children with symptoms should **not** attend school for any reason. If someone in your household is extremely clinically vulnerable, children should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to, and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions.

We will use these principles and guidance to decide if pupils are shielding or self-isolating:

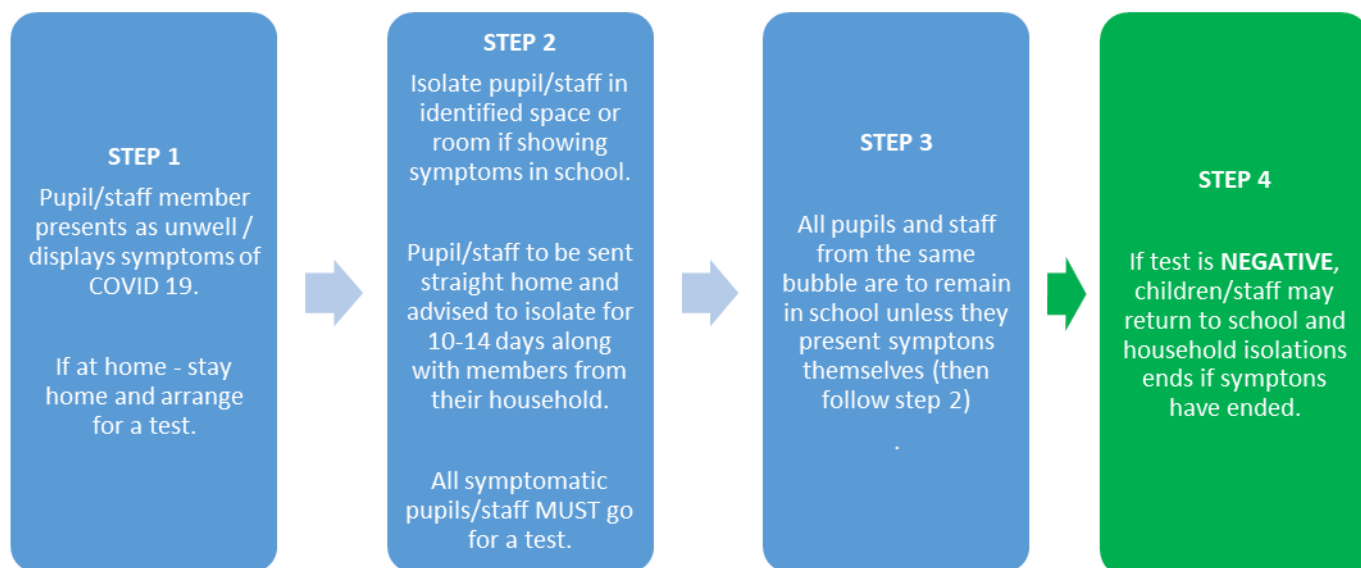
- children and young people who have been classed as [clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions](#) have been advised to shield. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Few if any children will fall into this category, but parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category
- child or young person who lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, can attend their education or childcare setting
- if a child or young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the [guidance on shielding](#), it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, if they are able to understand and follow those instructions - this may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend

Reporting your child's absence

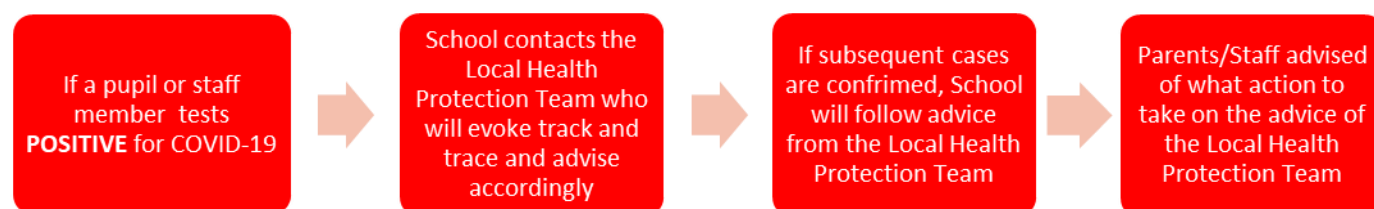
Parents/Carers should notify us by calling the school office before 9:30 a.m. if their child is unable to attend. Parents/Carers will be expected to inform the school of the reason for their child's absence. Based on this information, Parents/Carers will be told how long they should keep their child at home. However, if your child has had sickness and/or diarrhoea, we will ask that your child remains at home for 7 days.

Pupils/Staff presenting symptoms and reporting absences

If a child or a member of staff presents symptoms whilst on site or at home, the following flow chart will be to be followed:



If a child or a member of staff tests positive for COVID-19, the following flow-chart will be followed:



Attendance

From 1st September 2020, attendance is mandatory for all children and therefore the Attendance Policy will be implemented. This can be found in the school app or our website.

Please note the following:

School will not be administering medicines other than prescribed medication that is required **four times per day only** for example antibiotics. Should your child require medications such as Calpol for temperature relief, your child should not be attending school.

Non-attendance and accountability during a local or national lockdown

Parents will not be fined for non-attendance at this time, and schools and colleges will not be held to account for attendance levels.

Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not

This includes children in eligible year groups, children of critical workers and vulnerable children, such as:

- where a pupil is shielding, self-isolating, or the pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). (Temporarily, code Y can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus).
- where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil should be recorded as code I (illness).
- where a pupil does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school, the pupil should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate

During this time, all absence should be classed as authorised.

We will continue to inform social workers where children with a social worker do not attend.

Attendance Register

We will take our attendance register as above. We will also complete the online Educational Setting Status form which gives the Department for Education daily updates on how many children and staff are attending.

Pupils who are not eligible to attend school

This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session, i.e. health issues.

They should be recorded as code X (not required to be in school). (Temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.)

Pupils who are attending other schools

Where a pupil is attending:

- another school at which they are registered (for example, a pupil referral unit (PRU)), as would normally be the case, code D (dual registered) should be used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question as they are attending the other school at which they are registered
- a host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them, the pupil will not be registered at the host school. The home school should record the pupil as attending an approved education activity using code B (off-site educational activity) - the host school does not need to add this child to their attendance register but should keep a record of their attendance for safeguarding purposes and include the child in their daily totals for the educational setting status form - schools should put in place arrangements whereby the host school notifies the home school of any absences.

Using other authorised absence and attendance codes

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these as usual, such as code M (medical appointment).