

Attendance and Absences Policy Statement

Policy for Attendance & Absence
Leadership Group
Reviewed Spring 2025
For Review: Spring 2028

Introduction

Pupil attendance is of the utmost importance. This policy is reviewed in line with the schedule in the School Improvement Plan.

Regular attendance at school has always been important. Education provides a means of advancement for all young people. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in law. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. We also understand that poor punctuality, poor attendance or patterns of poor attendance can be an indicator of safeguarding issues. We take the issue of poor punctuality and attendance very seriously and put a number of measures in place to support parents and families.

Parents and the School

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 parents of children of compulsory age are required to ensure that they receive full-time education, whether by regular school attendance or otherwise. Parents are thus primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school. It is the responsibility of the school to support attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance. Parents should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn.

Reporting Absences

It is parents' responsibility to inform the school of the reason for the child's absence as soon as possible. Parents are expected to contact the school either by letter or by telephone on the first day of absence and to provide information as may be required. Where a child is ill the school should be notified of the nature of the illness and, when this can be predicted, the date the child is expected to be able to resume his or her studies.

Where irregular attendance of a registered pupil is causing concern the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be notified and the LA may apply to the courts for an education supervision order and where necessary parents may be prosecuted.

Lateness

Pupils arriving late may seriously disrupt not only their continuity of learning but also that of others. Registers will be kept open for a period of 30 minutes after the register is taken at 8:50am. Where pupils miss registration altogether and fail to provide an adequate explanation they will be marked as **unauthorised absent even** though they may arrive later. Where a pupil does arrive late they must report to the School Secretary who will note their attendance. If a child is genuinely unavoidably late because of difficulties at home or other circumstances the classteacher or Headteacher must be informed in writing. A record of pupils who are late is given to the Headteacher each Friday. The school's EWO visits the school on a regular basis to check the registers for lateness and absence of children. If regular lateness or absence is noted, the EWO after consulting with the Headteacher will take appropriate action.

Procedure for absent/late children

The register is checked by 9.30am each morning. Messages from the absent line are noted. Parents of children with no reason for absence will be contacted by phone. If no reply by 9.30am then the emergency contact numbers provided by the parent will be contacted. If no response by 10.00am then the EWO is contacted.

Children who arrive late, after 8.50am, are registered in the late book. Reason for their lateness is recorded on our Management Information System (MIS) and appears on their school reports. Reports are run from our MIS each half term and any children with persistent late marks or absences are highlighted and passed on to the headteacher.

The Headteacher monitors, contacts parents if there are concerns or a pattern is emerging. If attendance goes below 90% the EWO is contacted.

Special Occasions

Exceptional occasions may be sanctioned as an authorised absence and the Headteacher would need to be notified in writing in advance of the circumstances in order to authorise the absence. An application form is available in the pigeon holes in the school foyer and on the school website.

Family Bereavements

The death of a family member can be a particularly traumatic event in any young person's life. The Headteacher must be notified and will treat any request for absence sympathetically.

Family Holidays and Extended Trips Overseas During Term Time

In accordance with recent Department of Education advice, the Headteacher will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. An application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is entirely granted at the Headteacher's discretion.

If parents take their child out of school during term time without the written permission of the Headteacher it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Days of Religious Observance

Section 444(3) (c) of the Education Act 1996 provides that an offence is not committed where the absence of a pupil of compulsory school age results from participation in a day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Such absences are classified as authorised absence. Parents should notify the school in advance of such an absence.

COVID

This policy will change where necessary with government guidance relating to COVID exceptional situations.

Spring 2025