



PHOENIX
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance & Lateness Policy

Attendance Champion – Melissa Ireland-Hubbert
Attendance Officer – Emma Roworth

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This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
 - Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
 - Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
 - [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>
- It also refers to:
- [School census guidance](#)
 - [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
 - [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons

The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs

- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools]
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
 - Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
 - Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff

- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The Senior Attendance Champion is Melissa Ireland-Hubbert and can be contacted via 01634 829009 and/or headteacher@phoenixprimary.com

The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The Attendance Officer is Emma Rowarth and can be contacted via 01634 829009 and/or office@phoenixprimary.com

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to Cypad / Arbor.

School staff

School staff will:

- Respond to Study Bug messages from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the allocated staff where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Report their child's absence before 8.55am on the day of the absence via StudyBugs each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 current and working emergency contact number for their child, this should be updated when necessary.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Ensure that holidays are not requested / taken during term time.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority

➤ Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Emma Roworth Attendance Officer, Erika Barnwell FLO or Claire Beer DDSL, who can be contacted via 01634 829009 or on Dojo.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school and arrives on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child, and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Irregular attendance undermines their education and sometimes, puts pupils at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour. Reasons for lateness and non-attendance may be complex and outside the control of the school but school must actively pursue the goal of regular attendance by all.

Promoting Good Attendance

The school will:

- Distribute from the AASSA, LA/DfE, - information leaflets to parents
- Distribute essential policy information and other supportive information
- Keep parents informed of regulations through the school newsletter
- Operate pastoral team support groups for pupils with poor attendance
- Monitor and follow up all absences and lateness
- Hold regular meetings with the Family Liaison Officer, DDSL, Attendance Officer, Headteacher and

AAP

- Hold half-termly attendance meetings
- Report attendance figures to the local governing board and parents (in newsletters etc)
- Reward improvement with Attendance wheel and parent incentives
- Support anxieties and pastoral challenges with the use of Therapy dogs and embedded pastoral systems.

Registers

Marking attendance registers twice daily, is a legal requirement. Pupils must be marked as present, absent, or engaged in an approved offsite activity. The register also shows whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised, the Headteacher has this responsibility. Individual attendance records may be used as court evidence.

We will keep an electronic attendance register via Study Bugs and Arbor and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each school day and once during the afternoon, after lunch. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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.

We will also record:

- [For pupils of compulsory school age] Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.35am and ends at 3.10pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35am and will be kept open until 8.55am. The register for the second session will be taken at the year group allocated time (this differs due to lunch)

Authorising Absence

The administrator in charge of attendance can authorise absence for approved reasons. Where there is doubt, the Headteacher, on behalf of the local governing board, should take a consistent approach. The absence must be unavoidable. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation.

The following reasons are examples of the kinds of absence that will not be authorised:

- Absence of siblings if one child is ill / or if parents are unwell
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day, without medical evidence
- Birthdays

Any student who falls below 96% will be required to provide medical evidence and could be referred to the Attendance Advisory Service if absences are marked as unauthorised on the school register.

Sickness & Diarrhoea – If infectious, the child should be kept at home for 24 hours from the last incident. If not infectious i.e., from something eaten, 24 hours from the last incident.

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.55am or as soon as practically possible, by updating StudyBugs - <https://studybugs.com/>
In the rare circumstance that the pupil's parent is unable to access studybugs, the school must be notified via phone. 01634 829009

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. 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.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Study Bugs will automatically send out a first calling message reminding parents that the school has not been informed of this absence.
- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will send a Dojo and / or complete a home visit. The school will also seek to contact external agencies such as social care or police should they feel this is in the best interest of the child's welfare.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

Monitoring Attendance and Lateness

Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. The school uses Study Bugs to monitor attendance, patterns to compare locally and nationally.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be 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.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers via Study Bugs, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

Persistent Absence

A pupil is classed as a persistent absentee (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, whether it be authorised or unauthorised, or a mixture of both. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' full

support and encouragement to tackle it. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system, and we combine this with tracking academic progress to assess the effect on the pupil's attainment. If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see above)
- Inviting parents/carers to a school Attendance Clinic, this may include attendance from a Governor.
- Walking bus with Therapy Dogs
- FLO home visits

If a new pupil has a history of poor attendance at their previous school, there will be an immediate referral to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner (APP) and a pre-start attendance meeting will be held. The school has a 'five-step' approach to monitoring absence and lateness. It will not always be appropriate to progress through all these steps or even to carry them out in the order listed. Responsible staff will use discretion and discuss each case carefully.

- Telephone calls
- Letters
- Request medical evidence
- Attendance meeting
- Issue Notice to Improve (review 3-6 weeks, suggest 3 weeks max with a caveat such as NB – A Penalty Notice may be issued as soon as an unauthorised absence is recorded)
- Referral to LA

Unauthorised Absence

All pupils are encouraged to attend school every day of the 190 days that school is open. The register is called twice daily, and pupils are expected to be present for the 380 sessions, or half days. That leaves 175 days for family holidays, shopping trips and other needs.

As a school we prioritise teaching and learning, therefore, in accordance with the local and National guidelines, Phoenix Primary School does not authorise holidays during term time. Permission may only be granted by the Headteacher, in exceptional circumstances.

A request for such absence should be made in writing to the Headteacher. When requesting leave of absence during term time may you be reminded that 10 days of absence equates to 20 sessions missed schooling, which is equivalent to 5.2% of absence. Please note: any child who has taken a term time holiday will be required to provide medical evidence for any further absences during the remainder of the academic year.

Any absences due to ill health either directly before or after a school holiday will need to provide medical evidence in order for the school to authorise the absence. Notes:

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 has made it possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence can be dealt with by way of a penalty notice. These penalty notices will require the recipient to pay a penalty notice, currently £80.00 if paid within 21 days or £160.00 if paid within 28 days.
- A penalty notice will be issued to each parent for each child.
- Non-payment of these penalty notices will result in legal proceedings.
- If a Parent/Carer request for a term holiday is refused, but the holiday taken, it will be classified as unauthorised absence and may be subject to a penalty notice being served to each parent/ carer that resides with the child by Medway's Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA)
- Permission sought after a holiday has been taken will not be granted.

If the parent/ carer removes a student from their education for the purpose of a suspected holiday without advising the school this will be referred to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP), a letter will be sent from the school requesting that the parent/ carer contacts the school to confirm the reason for absence. No response will assume to be a holiday absence and penalty notice(s) may be issued. The Academies policy is not to authorise holidays during term time. Any applications for leave in term time must be made in writing to the Headteacher. There is no automatic right to term time leave of absence, and your request is likely to be declined except in the most exceptional circumstances. Each application will be considered on its own merit.

Lateness

Every child who arrives after 08.55 must enter school by the main entrance and report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked with an L until 09:15 when the code will change to U unless there is an adequate explanation for the lateness. Frequent lateness will be discussed with parents by the Attendance Coordinator, called into an Attendance Clinic, or may be referred to the AASSA. Frequent lateness can provide grounds for prosecution.

Ten days' absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carers, then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing from education (CME). The Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP) will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents / carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via regular individual updates on Study Bugs, school reports, individual conversations with Attendance Officer and Headteacher if concerns are raised and support to be offered. Class and Year group updates are also distributed via weekly newsletters.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

This information seeks to help clarify the meaning of 'exceptional circumstances' and outline some guiding principles to aid the Headteacher's decision-making process while giving parents a consistent and fair approach to requests for any term-time absence.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional circumstances' are that they are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'.

Guiding principles

Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. The Headteacher will rightly prioritise attendance. The default school policy is that absences will not be granted during term time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

The decision to authorise a pupil's absence is at the Headteacher's discretion based on their assessment and merits of each request.

If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term time, then it would not be normal to authorise absence for such an event, for example:

- holidays or other travel, including as a result of parental work commitments, are therefore not considered 'exceptional circumstances'.
- leave which is taken because of the availability of cheaper fares or other costs are not regarded as exceptional circumstances.
- claims of illness as a reason for a delayed return, particularly after normal school holidays will not be considered unless accompanied by travel tickets dated before the school opens or other agreed dates.

Medical documentation from abroad will not normally be accepted unless accompanied by travel documents indicating travel dates prior to school reopening.

➤ Absences to visit seriously ill relatives or for a bereavement of a close family member are usually considered to amount to 'exceptional circumstances', but for the funeral service and travelling time only, not for extended leave. Absence will only be authorised if the Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.

➤ Absences to attend parents' own wedding may be exceptional if the Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there will be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.

- The needs of the families of service personnel will be taken into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.
- Reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities will be made and may result in a leave being granted as an exceptional circumstance.
- Families may need time together to recover from a trauma or crisis, including where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.

When making absence-related decisions, the Headteacher will consider:

- a pupil's record of attendance for the current and previous academic years.
- time of absence being taken in the school year. If the request is made to extend the beginning or end of a school holiday period, it is unlikely to be considered exceptional.

The Headteacher can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether a particular absence is authorised.

The following factors may also help the Headteacher to reach a decision:

- number of school days being missed.
- any exceptional term-time leave requested and/or taken in previous academic years for a similar purpose.
- whether alternative care arrangements been considered by the parent to limit the time away from school.
- impact on any interventions, assessments or referrals being undertaken with the child or family, for example, family support, social care assessments, CAMHS, SEN.
- the potential impact that the absence will have on the child.
- whether the absence falls within any key stage national tests or exams.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the policy, a written request must be submitted to the Headteacher in all cases. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

Schools to refer via AASSA 2024-2025 referral form, provide evidence of letters/emails (emails if permission to use obtained from parents/carers), medical evidence, meeting notes, evidence to attendance meeting, Notice to Improve, review period clear, and a registration certificate showing 10+ unauthorised sessions of absence.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

Any holiday-related absence taken that includes 10 sessions in 10 weeks, may result in a Penalty Notice. In this instance, a 'Notice to Improve' notification will not be issued beforehand.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. The Local Authority may proceed the case to court.

First offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be: **£80 per parent, per child** paid within 21 days. This increases to £160 per parent, per child if paid after day 21, until day 28. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.

Second Offence (within 3 years) - the second time a Penalty Notice is issued the amount will be **£160 per parent, per child** paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years) - the third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case may be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court under s.444 of the Education Act (1996) or other legal interventions considered. The Magistrates' Court can order fines up to **£2500 per parent, per child**

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by Melissa Ireland-Hubbert, Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy

➤ Values and Relationships 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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays