East Midlands
Education Trust

Attendance Policy

Mornington Primary School

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Key Attendance Contacts

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Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Rebecca Joyce head@morningtonprimary.org
Local Authority - Nottinghamshire	
School Admissions Team	www.mornington.notts.sch.uk
Fair Access Team	Fair access and children missing education | Nottinghamshire County Council email: fairaccess@nottscc.gov.uk telephone: 0115 977 3225
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East Midlands Education Trust	
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1. Introduction

1.1 All East Midlands Education Trust (EMET) schools aim to create a safe, caring and friendly environment for all pupils so that they can learn effectively, improve their life chances and achieve their full potential.

1.2 We recognise that regular attendance to school is critical for a pupil's academic, social and emotional development. There is a strong correlation between a pupil's attendance to school and their academic achievement. When pupils attend regularly, they can also benefit from valuable support and the many experiences and opportunities that the school provides. They are also able to build more positive and lasting relationships, grow in confidence and develop good habits for life and the world of work.

1.3 We recognise that pupil attendance is a significant challenge across schools nationally in the wake of the covid-19 pandemic. The Department for Education (DfE) has published a data which shows that the proportion of pupils who attend school almost every day has fallen and the proportion of pupils who are severely absent has risen. All schools have a role to play in addressing these issues.

1.4 The school's commitment to pupils' attendance and punctuality is embedded in our school culture. We strive to:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promote good attendance and punctuality along with the benefits of both
- Ensure that attendance for all groups of pupils is above our target of 95% or, where this has not yet been achieved, is better than the national average
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Build strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Ensure that, in all our work on attendance, there is a strong focus on our most vulnerable pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

1.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Trust policies	School policies
• Alternative provision • Complaints • Equality • RSE (relationships and sex education), health and wellbeing • Safeguarding – child protection • Supporting pupils with medical needs • SEND	• Accessibility plan • Curriculum • Behaviour

1.6 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following local authority policies and documents:

- Attendance and children missing in education guidance

- Pathway to provision
- Early help guidance

2. Legislation and guidance

2.1 This policy is based on the following DfE statutory guidance:

- Working together to improve attendance (2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)

2.2 The DfE's attendance guidance is based on the following legislation:

- 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)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

2.3 This policy also complies with our funding agreement the Trust's articles of association.

3. Equality statement

3.1 The East Midlands Education Trust has due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PESD), which places a general duty on schools and colleges to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard for the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under The Equality Act); to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

3.2 Provisions in The Equality Act allow schools and colleges to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with specific disadvantages affecting pupils with a particular protected characteristic, such that their needs can be met. There may, therefore, be times when the school may consider positive action to support a group of pupils if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately affected by a particular attendance concern.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The **Governing Body** is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- 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
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

4.2 The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Ensuring that a suitably experienced and qualified member of the leadership team is appointed as Senior Attendance Champion and that they have the time and resource needed to undertake the role (this includes consideration of other significant areas for which they have responsibility)
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils, including ensuring that appropriate cover is put in place in the event of staff absence in the school's attendance team
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Senior Attendance Champion to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers 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/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
    - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
    - Providing the local authority with the details of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, including those who meet national thresholds for sanctions such as penalty notices
    - Providing the local authority with details of pupils who have not been at school for a significant period of time as set out in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
    - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

4.3 The **Senior Attendance Champion** is the member of the senior leadership team who has strategic oversight of attendance. This senior leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they have up to date knowledge and undertake regular training to support them to undertake their role
- 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/carers 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
- Keeping the headteacher and, as appropriate, other senior leaders informed of any issues

4.4 The **Attendance Officer** is the member of staff who has day-to-day responsibility for managing attendance processes in the school. The attendance officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that they have up to date knowledge and undertake regular training to support them to undertake their role
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data including ensuring that attendance records are well maintained and accurate
- 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/senior attendance champion (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

4.5 School **administrative/office staff** are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a daily basis, ensuring that information is accurately recorded on the school's management information system and, where appropriate, communicated to other, relevant members of staff
- Directing parents/carers to the attendance officer or other key staff where additional support is required around a pupil's attendance

4.6 **All staff** are responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of good attendance in their communications with pupils and parents/carers
- Recording attendance on a daily basis (within 10 minutes of the start of any session and using the correct codes) via the school's management information system (Arbor).
- Attending training on attendance or related matters

4.7 **Parents** are expected to:

- Make sure that their child attends school on time on every statutory school day
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of absence (and on each subsequent day of absence) and advise the school when their child is expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure their child is collected on time at the end of the school day
- Ensure, wherever possible, that appointments for their child are scheduled for outside the school day
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance via the school's processes (see appendix B)
- Seek support, where necessary, to help their child maintain good attendance and work positively with the school to identify and address any barriers to their child attending well

5. Attendance strategy

5.1 All EMET schools share an overarching attendance strategy, which is set out below and the aims of which are set out in section 1.3 of this policy. Central to our approach is the principle that everyone has a role to play in supporting pupils to attend well.

Understanding pupils and families well	Creating a sense of belonging	Ensuring high quality universal provision

Responding to absence	**Attendance is everybody's responsibility**	Monitoring the impact of approaches
Communicating effectively and promoting positive attendance	Delivering targeted, graduated interventions	Providing staff training

5.2 The way in which our school delivers the key elements of this strategy are set out in sections 6 to 13 of this policy.

6. Understanding pupils and families well

6.1 The school recognises that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to improving attendance. Knowing and understanding our pupils, their families, their influences, and their specific challenges can help us to diagnose some of the underlying causes of absence. It can also help to understand individual barriers to attendance, and help us to choose effective, targeted approaches.

6.2 The school adopts a range of approaches to ensure that there are adults that know each individual pupil well and that the information they hold can be used to support pupils to attend well. This includes ensuring that:

- The school makes establishing strong relationships with pupils in class and across the school a priority for all staff
- School staff work closely with colleagues at any feeder settings to gather information about pupils who will be joining the school
- Key data and other information is gathered and regularly updated through parental data collection activities
- There is a strong induction programme for pupils when they join the school
- All pupils have a form tutor/class teacher who they see daily and who undertakes a range of activities during form time sessions that are designed to help build relationships
- There are robust processes for identifying any special educational needs and/or disabilities
- There is a robust system for assessing pupils' academic progress across the full range of subjects
- The school tracks and monitors pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning
- Relevant, up-to-date information is shared on a regular basis with teachers and other adults who will be working with a particular pupil (subject to any confidentiality or safeguarding considerations)
- There is a range of methods for parents and carers to engage with the school, including through parents' evenings, telephone contact and other in-person events and meetings

6.3 The school also makes intelligent use of a range of data and other information to build a contextual picture of the school and local community, so that the particular barriers that are faced by pupils and families can be identified sharply. This includes identifying individual pupils or groups of pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence as well as identifying patterns and trends, such as days of the week or times of the school year where absence is more likely. The school will utilise external data sources, including the banded attendance data and school-level reports provided by the DfE.

7. Creating a sense of belonging

7.1 Our school is inclusive. Consequently, we actively remove barriers to learning and participation, provide an education that is appropriate to pupils' needs, and promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential for all pupils. We recognise that making sure pupils feel seen, understood, and safe is a crucial starting point for supporting attendance, especially for more vulnerable students who may have fewer protective factors than others.

7.2 There are many things that the school does to help pupils feel a sense of belonging. This includes (but is not limited to):

- All our staff are ready to welcome pupils into school every day and show this in their behaviours and the things that they say, particularly to those pupils who return from a period of absence
- Our senior leaders and other staff greet pupils (and, as appropriate, parents and carers) on the school gate each day
- We do all that we reasonably can to make the classroom and wider school environment as welcoming as possible.
- We ensure that our school uniform is affordable, minimise the branded items it includes and offer a uniform exchange to support families
- We provide high quality, nutritious food and regularly take feedback from pupils about the food on offer
- We provide a breakfast club that is open to all pupils
- We ensure that toilet areas are clean and well maintained
- We do not stop pupils from going to the toilet during the school day unless it is clear that they are doing so to disrupt or avoid learning
- We provide free sanitary products for any pupils who need them
- We ensure that there are different areas open to pupils at break and lunchtime, including outdoor provision (weather permitting), places pupils can be active and quieter environments
- We ensure that our curriculum reflects the demographics and needs of our school community and is accessible for all pupils through its design and delivery
- We ensure that pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that are inclusive and cater for a range of interests
- Staff will support pupils to catch up when they return from a period of absence and will be mindful of the learning they may have missed when planning activities such as 'cold call' questioning (see appendix D for further information on how we support pupils returning to school from lengthy absences)
- We provide additional pastoral support for pupils who are finding things difficult, including through counselling
- Our reward systems are inclusive and used by all our staff to recognise pupils' achievements

8. Ensuring high quality universal provision

8.1 When pupils are in school, their experience should be inclusive, positive and supportive of their long-term academic achievement and personal development. We strive to make school unmissable.

8.2 Our school is ambitious for all pupils. We strive for all pupils to become the best version of themselves and to achieve in line with their full potential academically and socially. It is this aspiration that drives the school's ongoing evaluation and development work in all areas.

8.3 When we evaluate different aspects of our provision, we are careful to ensure that we consider how well things are working for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable pupils or those who come from groups that tend to achieve less well nationally. Our analysis always breaks available data down to focus on different groups of pupils.

8.4 We recognise that the best way to improve what we do is to learn from the very best practice across the education sector. To this end, the school actively engages with published research and participates in a range of networks locally and nationally.

8.5 The school ensures that pupils regularly have opportunities to share their views on different aspects of school. For example:

- Pupils can become members of our school council, who meet regularly and feedback the views of pupils to senior leaders
- Pupils can complete a number of surveys
- There are structured discussion opportunities through the school's personal development programme

8.6 The school ensures that parents and carers regularly have opportunities to share their views on different aspects of school. For example:

- Parents and carers can complete an annual survey
- Parents and carers have regular opportunities to attend meetings in school where there are opportunities to provide feedback to members of staff
- Information on contacting the school is provided to parents and carers on all newsletters

8.7 The school ensures that members of staff regularly have opportunities to share their views on different aspects of school. For example:

- Members of staff complete a number of surveys
- Members of staff have regular opportunities to provide feedback during team and whole staff meetings and training sessions or through the appraisal process

8.8 We listen carefully to what pupils, staff, parents and carers tell us and use this information to plan future developments.

9. Communicating effectively and promoting positive attendance

9.1 We recognise that well-designed communications with pupils and families can be effective for improving attendance. We also know that it also supports the development of positive relationships and helps to promote an equal partnership between school and home. Whilst we recognise parents' legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, we will endeavour to avoid communication that stigmatises, blames or discourages parents and carers.

9.2 The school will act to promote positive attendance with pupils, parents and carers. The approaches we take include the following:

- We have high expectations and set ambitious targets for pupils' attendance to school
- In our communications with pupils, parents and carers, we describe absence in terms of the number of days or lessons lost so that there is a clear link to the impact on pupils' learning
- On a regular basis, we include items in the school's newsletter for parents and carers that are related to attendance and the impact of both regular and irregular attendance to school (this includes providing information, help and guidance to support parents and carers)
- There are pupil rewards for good attendance for both individuals and classes
- Attendance is an item for discussion during all individual pupil review meetings, including parents' evening appointments, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews, Personal Education Plan (PEP) reviews for looked after children (LAC), one-to-one careers guidance meetings and post-suspension reintegration meetings

9.3 The school ensures that parents have access to up-to-date information on their child's attendance and punctuality through the online Arbor system and summary information provided on pupils' annual report. Information is presented clearly, and the school makes every effort to ensure that it is in accessible language with minimal educational 'jargon'.

10. Responding to absence

10.1 An early response to absence is essential. Whenever absence occurs, the school needs to be assured that the pupils in our care are safe and will need to take urgent action where there is a safeguarding concern. We also recognise that early intervention is more likely to address and reduce absence before it becomes habitual.

10.2 In the event of an unplanned absence, the school expects parents and carers to notify the school that their child is absent and to explain the reason for their absence. Parents are expected to do this via telephone or email as soon as practicably possible on each day of the absence. On notification of an absence, the school will identify whether the absence is approved or not before identifying the correct attendance code for entry onto the school register. The DfE attendance codes used by the school are listed in appendix A.

10.3 Where the absence is longer than three days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of an 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.

10.4 The school will authorise planned absences for medical or dental appointments as long as the pupil's parent or care notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents to make such appointments out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

10.5 Parents and carers must also apply for all other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Further details of the school's approach to managing leave of absence requests are in appendix B.

10.6 When registers close (the time that registers close is outlined in appendix A), the school will identify any pupils who are absent without explanation. The school will first triage, prioritising according to risk. This means that actions will be taken first for the most vulnerable pupils, including those for

whom there are safeguarding concerns or those who are persistently or severely absent (or at risk of being so).

10.7 On each day of absence, the school will contact the parent or carer of each pupil who is absent without explanation by telephone / by text or via the school's management information system. This will be done as soon as is practicably possible. If the school is not able to reach the parent or carer, alternative communication methods will be tried and/or the school will try to reach another parent, carer or listed contact. If the school is still not able to reach a parent or carer, school staff may make a home visit to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil and to ensure that they are safe and well. If this approach has been exhausted and the school has still not been able to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil, the school will contact the police. A referral to social care may also be considered.

10.8 Irrespective of any parental communication, on the third day of any absence where the reason is not completely justified (e.g. hospital admission), the school will usually conduct a home visit to check that the pupil is safe and well.

10.9 Where a pupil has an allocated social worker, the school will keep social care informed of any absences from school.

10.10 The school will keep records of all communication in relation to this process (including failed attempts to reach a parent or carer).

10.11 The school's attendance team will meet monthly to discuss any cases of ongoing absence and plan any further actions that might need to be taken to support or safeguard a pupil.

10.12 The school recognises that some pupils, including those who are absent for longer periods of time or who are returning to school following a period of absence, will require additional support. More information on our approach to this is set out in appendix D.

11. Delivering targeted, graduated interventions

11.1 There are data tracking systems in place to enable the school to monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality. This information will be reviewed at least once per month.

11.2 The school takes a graduated approach to addressing attendance concerns.

Tier 1: Universal *These steps are taken for groups of pupils following routine monitoring of attendance data.*	When a pupil's attendance falls below 95%, an attendance notification letter is sent home. Attendance is monitored for four weeks. If there is no improvement, an attendance warning letter is sent home offering support. The Attendance Lead offers support. Attendance is monitored for four weeks.
↓	
Tier 2: Individualised *These steps are taken for individual pupils when tier 1 approaches have not brought about sufficient improvement.*	The parents/carers are invited to an attendance meeting with the Headteacher. An attendance plan is put in place. Specific barriers to good attendance are identified and pupil/family needs are considered. Appropriate internal support is put in place, with input from specialist school teams (e.g. SEND) as required. Attendance is monitored for six weeks. A review meeting is held with the pupil and their parents/carers. The attendance plan either remains in place for another four

	weeks or ends. The plan, including the support in place, is adjusted as necessary. Escalation is made to tier 3 if external support is required.



Tier 3: Specialist *These steps are taken for individual pupils when tier 2 approaches have not brought about sufficient improvement and external support is required.*	An updated attendance plan is put in place. The Attend Framework is used to identify any barriers. The family are signposted to additional external support. Where appropriate, referrals are made by the school to external agencies and organisations, such as Early Help services. Internal support is reviewed and adjusted as necessary. Attendance is monitored for four weeks. A review meeting is held with parents/carers and any relevant professionals involved. The attendance plan either remains in place for another four weeks or ends. The plan, including the support in place, is adjusted as necessary. Escalation to enforcement is made if appropriate.

11.3 There may be occasions where it is appropriate for the school to move more quickly to tier 2 or 3. This might the case, for example, where the school has already built a good understanding of the individual circumstances of a pupil or their family, a pupil stops attending school completely or a pupil's attendance rapidly declines following a significant event in or outside of school.

11.4 The graduated response set out above does not automatically 'reset' at the end of an academic year. Support and interventions will be designed to prevent a drop off in attendance as pupils move from one academic year to the next.

11.5 Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions (including, but not limited to, those set out in appendix C) to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

12. Providing staff training

12.1 All members of staff have a role to play in supporting pupils to attend well. The school will ensure that all staff receive regular training to help them understand their responsibilities as set out in the policy. This will include ensuring that all staff have knowledge of:

- The issues or factors that impact on pupils' attendance
- The specific barriers faced by pupils and families in our school and local community
- How to record attendance information accurately
- How to raise concerns related to pupils' attendance or wellbeing

12.2 Those staff who have specific duties around attendance will be provided with additional training. This includes ensuring that they have access to cross-trust networks and, where available, information from the local authority.

13. Monitoring the impact of approaches

13.1 Monitoring the effectiveness of the approaches we use to support or improve pupils' attendance will help us to understand whether it is being delivered with high quality and success, or whether (and how) it might need to be changed to improve processes and outcomes.

13.2 We will regularly monitor attendance data, both at a headline level and at a more granular level to look at details that may otherwise be hidden. This includes reviewing banded attendance analysis and looking at attendance patterns over time. Our monitoring will always have a sharp focus on the more vulnerable pupils in our school. We will use attendance data to:

- Identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify pupils who 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
- Evaluate the impact of the different interventions and actions taken by the school, and make adaptations as a result

13.3 The school will regularly benchmark the school's attendance data against regional and national averages using various tools, including those provided by the DfE. This information will feed into the ongoing evaluation of our work on attendance.

13.4 The information we glean from this monitoring will be used to celebrate successes with pupils, families and the wider school community, as well to identify areas in which further developments are required.

14. Complaints

14.1 If any party has a concern or complaint over the implementation of this policy, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Headteacher, in accordance with the complaints policy.

15. Monitoring and review

15.1 The implementation of this policy will be monitored in each school by the Headteacher. Support and further monitoring will be provided by the trust executive team as required.

15.2 This policy will be reviewed every two years or in the event of changes to national legislation or statutory guidance.

Appendix A: Recording Attendance

1. The school will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. 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
2. 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
3. We will also record:
    - Whether the absence is authorised or not
    - The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
    - The nature of the circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
4. The following DfE codes will be used on the attendance register:

Code and definition		**Scenario**
Present and approved educational activity		
/	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:
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	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

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

6. The school day starts at 8.50am and ends at 3.15pm. Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm (Y3/4), 1.00pm (FS2), 1.15pm (KS1), 1.30pm (Y5/6) and be kept open until 1.35pm.

7. A pupil who arrives late before the register has closed will be marked as late using the appropriate code. A pupil who arrives later after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. The school will seek to understand the reasons for lateness and, where appropriate, provide support to pupils and families.

Appendix B: Leave of absence

1. The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.
2. The headteacher will only grant leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:
    - Taking part in a regulated performance, or a regulated employment abroad
    - Attending an interview
    - Study leave
    - A temporary time-limited part-time timetable
    - Exceptional circumstances
3. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time for which the pupil is authorised to be absent.
4. A leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are one-off events which are unavoidable. Examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a child looked after by the Local Authority or a housing crisis that prevents attendance. It is exceedingly unlikely that leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday or for something that appears to be as such to the school.
5. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
6. Parents and carers are expected to submit requests for leave of absence at least two weeks prior to the first day of requested absence using the school's leave of absence form. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.
7. There are several other valid reasons for authorised absence from school. This include (but are not limited to):

Illness (including mental-health illness)	See details in section 10 of this policy
Medical or dental appointments	See details in section 10 of this policy
Religious observance	This will only be in circumstances where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which he pupil's parent/carer belongs. 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

Suspension or exclusion	This applies where the pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made.

8. There are several other reasons that the school may allow a pupil to absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences. These include (but are not limited to):

    - Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity 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

Appendix C: Sanctions

1. The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), the 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**. If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the Local Authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.
2. 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
3. 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. Regardless of who issues the notice, the payment must be made directly to the Local Authority, by whom all monies are retained. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.
4. If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay within 28 days. The amount due is set nationally and is reduced if payment is made within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, there is not reduction for earlier payment.
5. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative legal action will be taken instead.
6. 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). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process. The amount due is set nationally and is reduced if payment is made within 21 days.
7. 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

8. The key information regarding penalty notices is summarised below:

National threshold for penalty notices:
10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period
Penalty notice fines will be considered when there are 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. The 10-week period applies to school weeks and may run across more than one academic year.

1	**First offence** The first time a penalty notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
2	**Second offence (within three years)** The second time a penalty notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
3	**Third offence and any further offences (within three years)** The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance, a penalty notice will not be issued. The case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Appendix D: Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

1. Where pupils have been absent from school for a short period of time (for example, because of minor illness), form tutors and, where appropriate, keyworkers will ensure that pupils are warmly welcomed and offered support to settle back into school. Teachers will ensure that pupils catch up with any missed work and that any gaps in learning are addressed as quickly as is practicably possible. This may include making use of the school's online systems or providing other resources for pupils to make use of at home.
2. However, we recognise that some pupils, particularly where they are returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, may need more support. The approaches we use include (but are not limited to):
    - Pastoral support and/or counselling
    - One-to-one 'check ins' with the pupil
    - Additional support with missed learning including through the school's online learning systems
    - Access to the school's Cave provision
    - Home visits
    - The use of alternative provision or referral to specialist services
    - A phased reintegration plan, which may include the temporary use of a reduced timetable or other timetable adjustments
    - Work with other groups of pupils to ensure that there is a network of support for the returning pupil
3. Where a pupil is absent from school due to mental ill health, physical ill health or SEND, the school will use best endeavours to provide support to the pupil. Approaches will include (but are not limited to):
    - The use of alternative provision (including online providers) or referral to specialist services
    - Access to the school's Cave provision
    - Regular 'safe and well' checks via the telephone, video meeting or in person
    - Home visits
    - Regular communication about in-school events and news to help them keep in touch
    - Where appropriate, supporting the pupil to keep in touch with friends
4. We recognise that, for some pupils, there are complex barriers to attendance. Our graduated approach (set out in section 11 of this policy) enables the school to provide targeted, individualised support for these pupils and their families.