



ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS, and hard copies are made available upon request.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

It is expected that all children of compulsory school age will attend every day when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. The school aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. The school promotes good attendance to ensure that all children can fulfil their potential and get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances. The most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- To ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the school can benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the school.
- To prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the school, reduce absence and set out the school's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance.
- To recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding.
- To help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.



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By law, schools are required to record in the attendance register: once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon, whether the pupil is present, absent, engaged in an approved supervised educational activity off-site, taking authorised or unauthorised absence, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances as defined in The Education Act 1996 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 and 2016.

This policy has been prepared to meet the school's responsibilities under:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- EYFS *statutory framework for group and school-based providers* (DfE, September 2025);
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Children Act 1989;
- Childcare Act 2006;
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Equality Act 2010; and
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (**UK GDPR**)

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, applies from August 2024);
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, applies from August 2024);
- Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, September 2023);
- Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);
- 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2025);
- Children missing education (DfE, September 2025);
- Summary table of responsibilities for children missing education (DfE September 2025)
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
- Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
- Providing remote education: guidance for schools (DfE, updated August 2024); and
- SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ATTENDANCE

The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

- the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;
- the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting



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pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;

- the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and parents;
- that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and
- children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

3. SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.
- The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and parents.
- Where there are challenges to attendance, unexplained and or persistent absences, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.
- The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.
- The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues. See MANAGING ATTENDANCE.

4. ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils (both of compulsory and non-compulsory school age) in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024.

- The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.
- The attendance register is kept electronically, and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.
- The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.



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- The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:

- physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken marked as / or \ ; or
- absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; marked as L or
- attends school after the taking of the register has ended – marked as U
- attending a place other than the school; or
- absent.

The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

- Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;
- For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;
- Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;
- Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

The school uses various codes for completing the registers and these codes align with DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance.

Children who arrive after the attendance register has been taken will report to the school office before going, or being taken, to their class.

In the Prep Department (Classes 8-11) the register opens at 8:00am to 8:30am. A child arriving between 8:30am to 8:40am is marked as L (Late). A child arriving after 8:40am, before registration is closed, is marked as U (arrived after registration has closed).

In the Pre Prep Department (Classes 5-7) the register opens at 8:45am to 9:00am. A child arriving after 9:00am is marked as L (Late). A child arriving after 9:10am, before registration is closed, is marked as U (arrived after registration has closed).

Children who leave the school during the day for an appointment should report to the school office on leaving and will be signed out. They should sign in again on their return.

5. RECORDING ABSENCES

Absences will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance relating to:

- Leave of absence.
- Other authorised reasons.
- Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause.
- Unauthorised absence.



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6. UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

The "unauthorised absence" codes will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

- holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the Head;
- the reason for absence has not been provided;
- a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;
- a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

7. MANAGING ATTENDANCE

The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law. The admission and attendance registers must be kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.

The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at: Prep Department 8:00am to close at 8:30am and Pre Prep Department 8:00am to close at 9:00am, but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips.

Afternoon registration will be at: Prep Department 1:45pm and Pre Prep Department 1:00pm.

7.1 The role of parents / carers:

The School expects all Parents to:

- make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;
- notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and
- cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

7.2 Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note, emails or telephones the school to explain the absence. For any absence other than sickness, the school requires the parent/guardian to complete a Request for Leave of Absence Form, which will be endorsed by the Head as either authorised or unauthorised.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go on holiday during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.



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7.3 Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

7.4 If a child is absent

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and inform the school office, where the staff will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian to ascertain the reason for the absence; ensure that there are no safeguarding concerns; identify whether the absence is approved or not and ensure that the reason for absence is correctly recorded on the attendance register.

When the child returns to school, a note, email or telephone call should be brought from or made by the parent or guardian to explain the absence. Messages regarding absences should not added to the EYLog.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety and whereabouts of the child.

7.5 Requests for leave of absence

The school believes that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. In exceptional circumstances, parents may apply to the Head to request a leave of absence for a child. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance and the Head must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head's discretion.

7.6 Repeated unauthorised absences

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. Where a child fails to attend school regularly or is absent without leave for more than 10 school days, the school will notify the local authority.

- *Please see separate document: Children Missing Education*

8. INFORMATION SHARING

Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms).



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Where enquiries following the absence of a pupil lead the school to reasonably believe that the child will not return, and no alternative provisions has been confirmed by the parent, the school will make a referral to the child's home local authority CME team without delay.

The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- New pupil and deletion returns
- Attendance returns
- Sickness returns.

The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

The School must provide specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State. The School meets this requirement by having an electronic management information system containing the required information. The School also uses this tool to monitor pupil level attendance and understand trends in attendance patterns.

9. RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.
- The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law.
- The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- The Proprietorial Body has overall responsibility for all matters which are subject to this policy.
- The Proprietorial Body will therefore examine closely the information provided them and seek to ensure that attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- The Proprietorial Body recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in the school.
- The school ensure that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents about it. The school provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.
- Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the Senior Management Team immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the Head, who will contact the parents or guardian.



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11. ADDITIONAL NEEDS

The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance.

It will also work with parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupils education, health and care plan is accessed.

Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance.

Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

12. PRESERVATION OF THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The school will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow up absence. Registers must be kept electronically. Every entry in the attendance register must be preserved for a period of six years after the date on which the entry was made.

The Attendance Policy has been reviewed in September 2025 and will be reviewed in or before September 2026.