

Attendance Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

- Our school is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its Pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance and punctuality.
- The whole school community – Pupils, Parents /Carers, Team Members and governance and oversight– have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone’s part in this.
- The policy has been drawn up based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it. Article 29 of the UN Convention on the rights of Children states ‘I have a right to an education which develops my personality, respect for others’ rights and the environment’

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1. Scope

1.1 Rationale

- 1.1.1 Our school is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its Pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. Pupils attending school regularly and punctually will be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and will develop great achievements both academically and socially.
- 1.1.2 We recognise that attendance difficulties are often an indicator of unmet need, anxiety, health needs, neurodiversity, adverse childhood experiences, or other barriers. Attendance concerns will be explored through a child-centred, trauma-informed and solution-focused approach.
- 1.1.3 If a Pupils attendance is below expectations for their entire school career, they will have missed over one year of education. 91.1% attendance means missing 17 days/85 lessons of school in one year. Missing 17 days a year also means dropping 1 GCSE grade (on average).
- 1.1.4 The policy has been drawn up based on current Government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all team members and Parents/Carers have access to this policy.

Days Absent	Missed Time	Number of Missed Lessons	Attendance
1	1 day	6	99.5%
2	2 days	12	99%
3	3 days	18	98.5%
4	4 days	24	98%
5	1 week	30	97.5%
10	2 weeks	60	95%
15	3 weeks	90	92.5%
20	4 weeks	120	89.7%
25	5 weeks	150	87.5%
30	6 weeks	180	85%
35	7 weeks	210	82.5%
40	8 weeks	240	80%

1.1.5 We are committed to meeting our obligation with regard to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting 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 ensure Pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

1.2 Legislation and guidance

1.2.1 This policy meets the requirements from the guidance [Working together to improve school attendance 2026](#) refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE, 2026
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments).
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Education Operations Team

2.1.1 The Education Operations Team is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school.
- Making sure Team Members receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

2.2 The Headteacher

2.2.1 The Head Teacher is the school's Senior Attendance Champion and has strategic responsibility for attendance. They lead attendance improvement, oversee attendance processes, monitor attendance data, and coordinate support with families, Local Authorities and external agencies.

2.2.2 The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Education Operations Team.
- Ensuring the accurate and timely recording and reporting of all absences.
- Ensuring that weekly attendance data is submitted, as appropriate to the Local Authority.
- Ensuring that the whereabouts of any Pupils who have not been accounted for by the close of registration is determined
- Supporting Team Members with monitoring the attendance of individual Pupils.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement and monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Reviewing and recording all request for absence from families.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to Pupils and families.

2.3 Administrative Teams

2.3.1 Administrators are responsible for:

- Accurate recording of attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes.
- Taking calls from Parents,/Carers, and Pupils about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system.
- Transferring calls from Parents,/Carers, and Pupils to a member of the senior leadership team or pastoral lead, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

2.4 Parents/Carers

2.4.1 Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day/timetabled session on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

2.4.2 Attendance concerns should be reported to the School Administrator by telephone/email. For attendance support, Parents/Carers should contact a member of the senior leadership team.

2.4.3 Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every day or timetabled session on time.

3. Recording Attendance

3.1 Attendance register

- 3.1.1 We will keep an attendance register and place all Pupils onto this register from their first day at the school.
- 3.1.2 We will complete an attendance register electronically at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session in the afternoon. It will mark whether every Pupil is:
- Present.
 - Attending an approved off-site educational activity.
 - Absent.
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 3.1.3 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.**

3.1.4 We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if 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.

3.1.5 Pupils must arrive at school by 9:00 am on each school day unless there is prior agreement with the Head Teacher.

3.1.6 The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00am and will be kept open until 9:20am. The register for the second session in the afternoon will be taken at 1:00pm and will be kept open until 1:20pm.

3.2 **Unplanned absence**

3.2.1 The school must be informed by no later than 09:30am on the first and subsequent days of absence. Pupils who do not arrive at school will receive a phone call home where the named parent must confirm that the child is with them and that they accept responsibility for their whereabouts. Pupils who are not reported as being absent or are unable to be reached, the school may conduct a welfare visit to the Pupil's home. If they are still not able to make contact, the Pupil will be reported as missing to the Police. A daily email of non-attendees with parental response is then emailed to the Head Teacher for recording.

3.2.2 Contact details for specific schools can be found on the Phoenix Learning and Care website. <https://phoenixschools.org.uk/>

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

3.2.4 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the Pupil's Parent/Carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

3.2.5 If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and Parents/Carers will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 **Planned absence**

3.3.1 Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the Pupil's Parent/Carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

3.3.2 Parents/Carers should contact the school office via phone or email. Contact details can be found at <https://phoenixschools.org.uk/>

3.3.3 However, we encourage Parents/Carers 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.

3.3.4 The Pupil's Parent/Carer 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.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

3.4.1 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.

3.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the Pupil's Parent/Carer 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 may conduct a welfare visit to the Pupil's home. The school may, if no contact can be made, call the police.
- 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 five working days after the session.
- Call the Parent/Carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving support from Early Help and Educational Welfare or named Caseworkers within the placing authority as appropriate.

3.6 Reporting

3.6.1 The school will regularly inform Parents/Carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly reports.

3.6.2 Reports will outline attendance levels, time missed from education and any impact on learning, wellbeing or progress.

3.6.3 Termly attendance data will be reported through DFE attendance collections on a termly basis in line with local processes.

3.7 Monitoring and Recording Daily Attendance Data

- 3.7.1 When the register is taken, the appropriate national attendance and absence code will be entered for every Pupil. Any Pupils who are not accounted for by the close of morning or afternoon registration will be recorded as absent using the N code until a reason has been established for their absence.
- 3.7.2 Where a Pupil is attending education provision at a place other than school, which has been arranged/agreed by the Local Authority, then the school will ensure that the Pupil is in attendance at this provision and any absences recorded using the relevant absence codes.
- 3.7.3 The school will investigate any unexplained absences at the close of registration and make reasonable enquiries to find the whereabouts of a Pupil who is missing school.

4. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

4.1 Approval for term-time absence

- 4.1.1 The Head Teacher will only grant a leave of absence to a Pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Head Teacher's discretion, including the length of time the Pupil is authorised to be absent for.
- 4.1.2 The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request.
- 4.1.3 Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:
- 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 Parents/Carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the Parents/Carers religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
 - Traveller Pupils 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)

4.2 Granting Leaves of Absence

- 4.2.1 A leave of absence can be granted when a Pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. There are, however, specific circumstances when our school would be expected to restrict a leave of absence to the specific circumstances outlined in the School Attendance Regulations. These are:
- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA).
 - Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by an authorised person and a parent the Pupil normally lives with.

- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with an authorised person and a parent the Pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the Pupil is of compulsory school age, both an authorised person, the parent who the Pupil normally lives with and school agree the Pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the Pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable. (For full details please see part-time timetable).
- Exceptional circumstances: We can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at our discretion.

4.3 Part-Time Timetables

- 4.3.1 In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a Pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a Pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a Pupil from attending school or another setting full-time, and a part-time timetable is used to help the Pupil access as much education as possible.
- 4.3.2 A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a Pupil's behaviour.
- 4.3.3 A part-time timetable should:
- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the Pupil normally lives with.
 - Have a clear ambition and be part of the Pupil's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
 - Have regular review dates which include the Pupil and their Parents/Carers to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
 - Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the Pupil, after which the Pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a Pupil with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period.
- 4.3.4 Where the Pupil has a social worker, the school is expected to keep them informed and involved in the process.
- 4.3.5 If the Pupil has an education health and care plan, the school should discuss the part-time timetable with the local authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.

- 4.3.6 In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a Pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record the absence accordingly.

5. Attendance Monitoring

5.1 Monitoring attendance

5.1.1 The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual Pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

5.2 Sharing Attendance Data

5.2.1 The school will share attendance data with the Department for Education in accordance with current DfE requirements and guidance on the sharing of daily Pupil attendance data. Information will be shared through approved electronic systems and in line with data protection requirements

5.3 Analysing attendance

5.3.1 The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify Pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these Pupils and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

5.4 Using data to improve attendance

5.4.1 The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other appropriate school team members, to facilitate discussions with Pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

5.5 Improving and Celebrating Attendance

5.5.1 The school celebrates good and/or improving attendance by:

- Rewarding those Pupils who make a substantial improvement to their attendance, in line with our Therapeutic Approaches (Behaviour) policy.
- Holding supportive meetings with Parents/Carers and Pupils where problems have arisen.
- Agreeing Individual Attendance Plans (IAP) with Pupils and Parents/Carers and review these regularly.

- Sending letters to Parents/Carers of Pupils who fall below the attendance threshold.
- Seeking the views of all stakeholders (including Pupils and Parents/Carers) on attendance.
- Provide regular feedback to the case worker from the local authority.

5.6 Attendance Monitoring

- 5.6.1 The Headteacher will monitor attendance patterns across the school and ensure that appropriate support and intervention are implemented where concerns are identified. Attendance will be reviewed regularly to identify emerging trends, persistent absence, punctuality concerns and any barriers affecting a Pupil's ability to engage fully in education.
- 5.6.2 Attendance data will be reviewed for all Pupils and for identified vulnerable groups, including Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Children Looked After, young carers and Pupils experiencing emotional wellbeing or mental health difficulties. Where concerns are identified, the school will work collaboratively with Parents/Carers and relevant professionals to implement appropriate support and intervention.
- 5.6.3 The school recognises that attendance difficulties may arise from a range of factors, including physical health needs, emotional wellbeing, mental health needs, neurodiversity, trauma and family circumstances. Attendance concerns will be considered in a child-centred and trauma-informed manner, with a focus on understanding and addressing barriers to engagement.
- 5.6.4 Where a Pupil's attendance causes concern, the school may implement an attendance action plan and convene meetings with Parents/Carers and relevant professionals to identify strategies and support arrangements. Progress against agreed actions will be reviewed regularly.
- 5.6.5 When a reduced or reintegration timetable is considered necessary, it will be implemented only following discussion and agreement with Parents/Carers and, where appropriate, the Pupil. Any reduced timetable will be supported by a documented plan, clear review arrangements and an intended pathway back to full-time education at the earliest appropriate opportunity.
- 5.6.6 Attendance trends, persistent absence, interventions and areas of concern will be reported termly to the Governance and Oversight Team to support effective monitoring and challenge

5.7 Reducing persistent and severe absence

- 5.7.1 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.
- 5.7.2 The school follows a graduated response to attendance concerns, beginning with early identification, discussion with families, support planning, and access to wider services.

5.7.3 Where attendance concerns persist despite appropriate support and intervention, the school will work collaboratively with Parents/Carers, placing authorities, Local Authorities and relevant professionals to explore barriers to attendance and identify the most appropriate support. This may include Early Help, Team Around the Child meetings, annual reviews, emergency reviews of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or wider multi-agency planning where attendance raises concerns regarding the suitability of provision or a Pupil's ability to access education safely and successfully.

5.7.4 The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the Parents/Carers of Pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

5.8 Attendance and Wellbeing

5.8.1 We recognise that attendance difficulties may arise from physical health needs, emotional wellbeing, mental health needs, trauma, neurodiversity, Special Education Needs (SEND), family circumstances or other vulnerabilities. The school will work collaboratively with Pupils, Parents/Carers and relevant professionals to understand barriers to attendance and implement appropriate support at the earliest opportunity. Attendance concerns will be approached in a child-centered and trauma-informed manner

5.9 Reduced and Reintegration Timetables

5.9.1 Where a reduced or reintegration timetable is considered necessary, it will be implemented only following discussion and agreement with Parents/Carers and, where appropriate, the Pupil. Any reduced timetable will be supported by a documented plan outlining intended outcomes, review arrangements and strategies to support a return to full-time education. Progress will be reviewed regularly, and the arrangement will remain in place for the shortest time necessary

5.10 Monitoring Arrangements

5.10.1 This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Education Operations Team.

5.11 Links with Other Policies

5.11.1 This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Therapeutic Approach (Behaviour) policy

6. Appendix 1 - Attendance Codes

6.1.1 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: • 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