



HOLY TRINITY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Strength for today,  
Bright hope for tomorrow*

## **Policy: Attendance**

**Previous Review: February 2024**

**This Review: July 2024**

**Next Review: July 2025**

**Frequency of Review: Annually**

**Responsible Committee: Full Governing Body**

# HOLY TRINITY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY



Our school vision is taken from the book of Isaiah 40:31. It describes the effort required to reach aspirational goals and reminds us that we can draw strength from God in the course of our endeavours. Attending school every day and on time is how pupils achieve their goals and are enabled to 'soar on wings like eagles'.

Our hope in God leads us to have high aspirations for our learning community. We value the uniqueness of each child, made in the image of God, and seek to provide a holistic, enriched curriculum and pastoral care, that empowers everyone with the strength, knowledge and wisdom to succeed and flourish. Where there are legitimate barriers to attendance, we seek to work in partnership with pupils, parents and other agencies to remove them, so that all pupils can benefit from their right to a full-time education.

The diagram shows how our vision is linked to the Church of England's Vision for Education.



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## 1. Aims

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

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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

- The governing board is responsible for:
  - Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
  - Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
    - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
  - Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
  - Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
  - Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
  - Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
  - Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
  - Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
  - Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
  - Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
  - Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

### 3.2 The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Assistant Head to be able to do so

- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader responsible for:

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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Keeley McCleave, Head of School and can be contacted via [admin@holytrinitynw3.camden.sch.uk](mailto:admin@holytrinitynw3.camden.sch.uk) or on 0207 435 9089.

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to class teachers and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Head of School)
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Working with School Inclusion Support Officer (SISO) to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Head of School/Assistant Head (authorised by the Head of School) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Alison McQueen and can be contacted via [admin@holytrinitynw3.camden.sch.uk](mailto:admin@holytrinitynw3.camden.sch.uk) or on 0207 435 9089.

### **3.5 Class Teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Having knowledge of the contents of this policy and communicating it to parents
- Discussing concerns around attendance and punctuality with parents, particularly those they are alerted to by the Attendance Officer
- Referring pupils/parents to the Attendance Officer where appropriate

### 3.6 School administration staff

School administration staff will:

- Promote good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Having knowledge of the contents of this policy and communicating it to parents
- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Ensure that reasons for lateness and absence are obtained in a timely manner and recorded accurately
- Support the Attendance Officer and Head of School to monitor and analyse attendance and punctuality data e.g. print reports
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Attendance Officer, Ms McQueen, where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### 3.7 Parents

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

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)
- Parents are expected to:
  - Make sure their child attends every day on time
  - Call the school to report their child's absence before 09.00 on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence when requested to by the administration team) and advise when they are expected to return
  - Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
  - Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
  - Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Attendance Officer, Alison McQueen, who can be contacted via [admin@holytrinityw3.camden.sch.uk](mailto:admin@holytrinityw3.camden.sch.uk) or on 0207 435 9089.

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We 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 again at the beginning of 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
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
  - The original entry
  - The amended entry
  - The reason for the amendment
  - The date on which the amendment was made
  - The name and position of the person who made the amendment
  - See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.
- We will also record:
  - Whether the absence is authorised or not
  - The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
  - The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

The school day starts at 09.00 (gates open 08.45) and ends at 15.30.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08.55 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09.00 and will be kept open until 09.30. The register for the second session will be taken directly once each class' lunchtime has finished (lunchtimes are staggered) and will be kept open for 30 minutes.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.00 or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school administration staff, who can be contacted by phone on 0207 435 9089.

The school office is open from 08.00 each morning.

Prior to 08.00 parents can leave a message on the school answering machine. Please ensure your message is clear and includes the following details:

- The child's full name
- The child's class e.g. Year 4
- Details of the illness e.g. vomiting, chicken pox, measles. Please do not just say they are ill/sick.
- When you expect them to return to school

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 Planned absence

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

### How to request leave for medical or dental appointments

- Please do not email or phone administration staff about appointments.

- Complete an '**Advance Notice of Medical or Dental Appointment**' form, which can be collected from the school office.
- The form should be completed as soon as you know you have an appointment. (This is particularly important if the child receives support from other professionals that visit the school.)
- Attach any appointment letters or screen shots of texts from GP/dentist/hospital if you have them

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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

#### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

#### How we respond to ongoing punctuality issues

- Parents are asked to bring their children into the office when they are late, as pupils are often flustered or distressed.
- The administration staff will ask parents to explain why the pupils are late. We expect parents to politely provide a reasonable answer. Administration staff will contact the parent by phone and/or email on the day if they do not bring their children into the school office. If no reason is supplied by the parent the Attendance Officer will contact the parent and invite them in for interview.
- The administration staff will record the reason why the pupils are late.
- The Attendance Officer will review the late register on a weekly basis and identify patterns in lateness or causes for concern. The administration staff may also refer ongoing punctuality issues to the Attendance Officer.
- The Attendance Officer will arrange to meet with the parent to establish what the barriers to punctuality are. Parents are expected to attend the meetings.
- Where the barriers to attending school on time are within the school's and/or another agency's power to remove, the Attendance Officer will draw up an Attendance Plan with the parent and/or refer to other relevant services.
- *Please note that parents are expected to make sensible decisions regarding how they organise their family life. The distance to the school or local parking restrictions should not constitute a barrier to punctuality in most cases.*
- The Attendance Plan will be reviewed by the Attendance Officer and parent on a half-termly basis. If no improvement has been made the Attendance Officer and the parent will identify what the remaining barriers are and put in place a new plan.
- Where parents do not engage with the school in the processes described above and punctuality is still an issue the school may then take further action, including putting more formal support in place e.g. an Attendance Contract.
- As a last resort the school may take legal action e.g. apply for a legally binding Education Supervision Order (ESO) or attendance prosecution. Where there are safeguarding concerns and an ESO is not appropriate/successful, cases may be referred to social services.

#### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the Local Authority and/or Social Services
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not



- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the School Inclusion Support Officer or social services
- The Attendance Officer will review attendance on a weekly basis and identify patterns in absence or causes for concern. The administration staff may also refer attendance issues to the Attendance Officer.
- The Attendance Officer will arrange to meet with the parent to establish what the barriers to attendance are. Parents are expected to attend the meetings.
- Where the barriers to attending school on time are within the school's and/or another agency's power to remove, the Attendance Officer will draw up an Attendance Plan with the parent and/or refer to other relevant services.
- *Please note that parents are expected to make sensible decisions regarding how they organise their family life. The distance to the school or local parking restrictions should not constitute a barrier to punctuality in most cases.*
- The Attendance Plan will be reviewed by the Attendance Officer and parent on a half-termly basis. If no improvement has been made the Attendance Officer and the parent will identify what the remaining barriers are and put in place a new plan.
- Where parents do not engage with the school in the processes described above and punctuality is still an issue the school may then take further action, including putting more formal support in place e.g. an Attendance Contract.
- As a last resort the school may take legal action e.g. apply for a legally binding Education Supervision Order (ESO) or attendance prosecution. Where there are safeguarding concerns and an ESO is not appropriate/successful, cases may be referred to social services.

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels.

### Individual pupils

- Half-termly attendance reports
- Autumn & spring term parents meetings
- Annual reports in summer term

### Class Attendances

- Weekly attendance post on Parent Hub
- Notices at autumn and spring term parent meetings
- Weekly notices in the playground

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

- The Head of School will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.
- The Head of School will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview (pupil not parent)
- Study leave (secondary school )
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

### Exceptional circumstances

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

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

### Guiding principles

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

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

- If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term time then it would not be normal to authorise absence for such an event, for example:
  - holidays or other travel to visit family abroad are therefore not considered 'exceptional circumstances';
  - leave which is taken because of the availability of cheaper fares or other costs are not regarded as exceptional circumstances;
  - claims of illness as a reason for a delayed return, particularly after normal school holidays will not be considered unless accompanied by travel tickets dated before the school opens or other agreed dates. Medical documentation from abroad will not normally be accepted unless accompanied by travel documents indicating travel dates prior to school reopening.
- Absences to visit seriously-ill close relatives or for a bereavement of a close family member are usually considered to amount to 'exceptional circumstances', but time may only be granted for short periods e.g. for a funeral service plus travelling time, **not for extended leave**. Absence will only be authorised if the head of school is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Absences to attend parents' own wedding may be exceptional if the head of school is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time and there will be an onus on parents to show clear evidence that this absence is absolutely an exceptional circumstance. In difficult family situations the head teacher may use her discretion in granting leave and each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.
- The needs of the families of service personnel will be taken into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.
- Families may need time together to recover from a trauma or crisis, including where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- When making absence-related decisions, the head of school will consider:
  - A pupil's record of attendance for the current and previous academic years;
  - Time of absence being taken in the school year. ***If the request is made to extend the beginning or end of a school holiday period, it is unlikely to be considered exceptional.***

- The head teacher can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether a particular absence is authorised.

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

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

#### **How to tell us about exceptional circumstances:**

- A parent should complete an 'Advance Request for Exceptional Leave' as soon as they know they want to travel. These are available from the school office. The parent with whom the pupil normally resides must make the application.
- Leave may only be granted where proper procedures have been followed and the permission given.
- Tickets and/or other travel arrangements should not be booked prior to discussion with and agreement of the school.
- Parents should not confuse telling the school or completing the request form with having permission.
- Where the school and the parents fail to reach an agreement and the child is then absent from school the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences are an offence and can be liable to legal action or a fixed penalty fine.

Extended absences may put your child's school place at risk.

In the event of an emergency when you have to take leave urgently, taking children, then you should inform the school or have the school informed immediately. Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively and evidence other than your word may be asked for.

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

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school

- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience (secondary schools)
- 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

## 5.2 Sanctions

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

### Penalty notices

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

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.

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

Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (**10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks**)

- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

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

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

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

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

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 action will be taken instead.

### Notices to improve

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

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

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with

- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Holy Trinity we have high aspirations for all of our pupils. This includes high aspirations around attendance and punctuality.

The importance of education and being in school to receive it is embedded in our school culture and curriculum in the following ways:

- Our Christian vision and core drivers
- Vision & values planning delivered at the beginning of each school year
- Class teachers may award Learner of the Week certificates or Special Mention certificates to pupils for good or improved attendance. These are awarded in Monday or Friday worship.

### Rewarding & Incentivising Pupils

#### The class with the highest attendance each week:

- Receive certificate in Friday worship
- Keep the school mascot, John, the Eagle, in their class for the week
- Have their lunch in the courtyard 'bistro' for the week (weather permitting)

#### The house with the highest attendance each week:

- Is announced in worship by the House Captains in Friday worship
- The house with the highest attendance receives an addition 50 house points
- The house with the second highest attendance receives an additional 25 house points
- The house with the highest number of house points each term receives a special treat e.g. House Party

#### Pupils with 100% attendance in a week (Mon-Fri):

- The names of the pupils are entered into a raffle
- A name is drawn from the raffle during Friday worship
- The winner receives a small reward e.g. 100% attendance pen and a 100% attendance sticker
- Other pupils that achieved 100% attendance in the same week receive a 100% attendance sticker from their class teacher

### Signage

- Banners on the school fence promote the benefits of good attendance and punctuality
- Weekly attendance for each class displayed in the playground – written up each week by House Captains
- Posters in the school hallway promote the benefits of good attendance and punctuality
- Webpage dedicated to promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Webpage with term dates published well in advance of the start of any academic year
  - The publication of term dates is featured in the Head of School's Blog with a link to the webpage
  - The link to the blog post is sent to parents' mobiles via Parent Hub

**Attendance Contracts – see sections 4.4 & 4.5**

## **7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

### **7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance**

- Parents should notify the school administration team if they are experiencing complex barriers to attendance and ask to be referred to the Attendance Officer.
- Parents may also be contacted by the Attendance officer if the school has concerns regarding their child's attendance and the circumstances surrounding that.
- The Attendance Officer will meet with the parent so that they can discuss the nature of barriers to attendance.
- The Attendance Officer and the parents will discuss what support the family feel they need.
- A potential plan will be drawn up by the Attendance Officer and the parent. Please note that Attendance Officer may need time to seek advice from other services and the Local Authority.
- Once all advice has been sought, the Attendance Officer and the parent will agree on an Attendance Plan.
- The impact of the plan will be evaluated as part of the half-termly monitoring and analysis cycle.

### **7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND**

Parents should notify the school administration team if their child cannot attend school due to mental or physical ill health or SEND as soon as possible. Where possible they should provide notes or reports from medical professionals, so that the school can begin to understand the nature of the child's health needs or SEND.

The SENDCo will contact parents to obtain further details and may ask to contact the health/SEND professionals involved. This will be in the interest of understanding the pupil's needs, so that we can make reasonable adjustments and remove in-school barriers to attendance.

A plan will be made to remove in-school barriers to attendance by the SENDCo in conjunction with the Attendance Officer, parents and, where appropriate, the pupil.

Where the pupil has an EHCP, the school will work with the family, services outlined in the EHCP and the Local Authority to ensure that the contents of the plan are being implemented and/or that provision is amended so as to better meet the child's needs. We may refer the family to support services such as SENDIASS, where they can obtain unbiased advice. Where barriers are not within the school's power to remove, we will support the pupil by referring to the relevant services.

The impact of plan will be reviewed on a half-termly basis by the Attendance Officer, SENDCo and Head of School as part of the data monitoring and analysis cycle.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

### **7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

Other than for reasons outlined in sections 7.1 and 7.2 pupils should not usually be absent for lengthy periods of time. Where pupils have unavoidably missed lengthy periods of schooling the school will support them by:

- Ascertaining the reason for the lengthy absence
- Monitoring the pupil's attendance and/or punctuality (Attendance Officer)
- Identifying if the pupil would benefit from in-school pastoral support to help them settle in

- Identifying if support is needed from other services to ensure that the pupil can maintain attendance and making referrals where necessary
- Class teachers will welcome the pupil and ensure they have a 'buddy' to help them settle in
- Class teachers will assess the pupil and identify gaps in learning
- Class teachers and, if necessary, the SENDCo, will put an intervention programme in place to help the pupil 'catch up' where appropriate
- Class teachers will communicate with parents regularly regarding their child's progress
- Where necessary the Attendance Officer will support the family to maintain their child's attendance as outlined elsewhere in this policy.

## 8. Attendance monitoring

**End of year attendance data will be reviewed by the senior leadership team to identify the following:**

- Attendance of the school - this will be benchmarked against national data
- Individual pupils whose attendance and/or punctuality has been a concern
- Cohorts/classes whose attendance and/or punctuality has been a cause for concern the previous year
- Cohorts that we predict may have issues with attendance and/or punctuality based on historical patterns
- The types of reasons reported for the absence e.g. illness
- When most absence occurs e.g. before school holidays
- Groups whose attendance and/or punctuality was a concern e.g. pupils with SEND, pupils receiving free school meals/pupil premium funding
- Groups that we predict may have issues with attendance and/or punctuality based on historical patterns
- This is so that we work proactively, plan our work and deploy limited resources where we hope they will have the most impact.

### **Weekly monitoring**

On a weekly basis the Attendance Officer will monitor:

- Attendance of the school - this will be benchmarked against national data
- The late register
- The attendance for each class
- Persistent absence (10% absence)
- Severe absence (50% absence)
- The attendance and punctuality of pupils who have been identified as having poor attendance and/or punctuality historically
- This is so we can prevent poor attendance and/or punctuality becoming habitual.

## **Half-termly monitoring and analysis**

On a half-termly basis the Attendance Officer will monitor and analyse:

- Attendance of the school - this will be benchmarked against national data
- The late register
- The attendance for each class
- Persistent absence (10% absence)
- Severe absence (50% absence)
- The attendance and punctuality of pupils who have been identified as having poor attendance and/or punctuality historically
- The attendance of the following groups:
  - Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Education, Health & Care Plans
  - Boys and girls
  - Pupils who would qualify for free school meals
  - Pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding
  - EAL
  - Looked after pupils (LAC)
  - Mobile pupils
  - Newly-arrived pupils
  - Groups identified as vulnerable to poor attendance and/or punctuality

The data will be reviewed by the Attendance Officer and Head of School. Decisions will be made as to what actions should be taken and where our limited resources will have the most impact.

## **Termly monitoring and analysis**

On a termly basis the Attendance Officer will monitor and analyse:

- Attendance of the school - this will be benchmarked against national data
- The late register
- The attendance for each class
- Persistent absence (10% absence)
- Severe absence (50% absence)
- The attendance and punctuality of pupils who have been identified as having poor attendance and/or punctuality historically
- The attendance of the following groups:



- Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Education, Health & Care Plans
- Boys and girls
- Pupils who would qualify for free school meals
- Pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding
- EAL
- Looked after pupils (LAC)
- Mobile pupils
- Newly-arrived pupils
- Groups identified as vulnerable to poor attendance and/or punctuality

The data will be reviewed by the Attendance Officer and Head of School. Decisions will be made as to what actions should be taken and where our limited resources will have the most impact.

Data and analysis will be communicated to the Full Governing Body on a termly basis by the Attendance Officer and Head of School.

## **8.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

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

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

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

## **8.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

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

### 8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)

Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead.)

Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

### 8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Keeley McCleave, Head of School. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

➤ **Appendix 1: attendance codes**

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>/</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
<b>K</b>	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
<b>V</b>	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
<b>P</b>	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>W</b>	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
<b>B</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
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
<b>C1</b>	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	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
<b>Y1</b>	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
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	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

<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In police detention</li> <li>➤ Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>➤ Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	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
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays