



OAKDENE
PRIMARY ACADEMY

GROWING THROUGH EXCELLENCE

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2025-2026

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A GREAT
PLACE
**TO BE A
PART OF**

MEMBER OF THE WADE DEACON TRUST

Key staff with designated responsibilities for Attendance		
NAME	ROLE	CONTACT DETAILS
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Introduction

At Oakdene Primary School, we are committed to providing a safe, happy, and inclusive learning environment where every child of compulsory school age has access to a high-quality, full-time education that is appropriate to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

We recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are fundamental to ensuring pupils maximise their learning opportunities, achieve their full potential, and maintain good wellbeing. To this end, we actively promote a whole-school culture and ethos that values and celebrates regular attendance.

When parents choose to register their child at Oakdene Primary School, they accept a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. This means that pupils are expected to attend every day the school is open, except in a limited number of allowable circumstances—such as illness or authorised absences granted in advance by the school.

Our Aims

At Oakdene Primary School, we are committed to fostering good attendance and punctuality as essential foundations for all pupils' academic success and personal development. From the very start, we set high expectations for attendance and punctuality, embedding these values into the school's vision, ethos, and daily life.

To support this, we aim for all pupils to maintain an attendance record above 97%. This target ensures that every child has the best possible access to the high-quality education and opportunities that Oakdene Primary School provides.

We recognise that missing school can have a significant and lasting impact on a pupil's learning and progress. To illustrate this, the following examples show the approximate number of school days missed at different attendance levels:

- **98%** attendance means **4** school days missed
- **95%** attendance means **10** school days missed
- **90%** attendance means **19** school days missed
- **80%** attendance means **38** school days missed

Additionally, consistent lateness also affects learning time:

- Being **5 minutes late each day** equates to approximately **3 days of learning lost per year**.

Promoting, Supporting, and Celebrating Attendance

At Oakdene Primary School, we believe that promoting and maintaining regular attendance is a **shared responsibility** involving parents, pupils, school staff, and the wider community. Through this policy, we set out how we work collaboratively to encourage positive attendance patterns and address challenges where they arise.

To help us all focus on this priority, the school will:

- **Submit daily attendance returns** to the Department for Education, meeting the legal requirements placed on all schools.
- **Build strong, trusting relationships** and work jointly with families to support good attendance.
- **Provide parents/carers with regular updates** on their child's attendance.
- **Promote the benefits of high attendance** through school assemblies and communications.
- **Maintain accurate admission and attendance registers** and follow up on any absences not reported by 9:25 am each day.
- **Celebrate excellent attendance** by publicly acknowledging individual, class, and year group achievements.
- **Reward pupils for good or improving attendance** as part of our positive behaviour approach.
- **Report regularly to parents/carers** on their child's attendance and the impact it has on their progress.
- **Contact parents/carers promptly** if their child's attendance falls below the school's target of 97%.
- **Promote high levels of attendance and punctuality** to support pupil achievement and progress.

- **Create a whole-school ethos** where good attendance and punctuality are valued by all.
- **Work in partnership** with pupils, parents, staff, and the Education Welfare Service to address attendance issues.
- **Foster a positive, welcoming atmosphere** in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, encouraging a sense of personal responsibility.
- **Establish clear systems** for monitoring attendance and ensuring consistency in recognising achievements and addressing difficulties.
- **Recognise the key role of all staff**, especially class teachers, in encouraging and promoting good attendance.

By working together in these ways, we aim to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to attend school regularly and achieve their full potential.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is written in accordance with the latest statutory and non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), including:

- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** (applies from **19 August 2024**)
- **Parental Responsibility Measures for School Attendance and Behaviour** (statutory guidance)
- The following documents outline the responsibilities of schools, parents, and local authorities and are underpinned by the following key legislation, which defines the legal duties and powers relating to 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](#), [2016](#) amendments)

- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- [Keeping children safe in education September 2025](#) – which outlines safeguarding duties, including the importance of monitoring attendance as part of identifying children at risk

Together, these documents ensure that our attendance procedures are legally compliant, fair, and supportive of the safeguarding and educational needs of all pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities

At Oakdene Primary School, promoting excellent attendance is a shared responsibility. Every member of the school community has a role to play in fostering a culture where attendance is valued, success is celebrated, and emerging issues are identified and addressed early.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body plays a strategic and statutory role in ensuring the school maintains high standards in attendance. Governors are expected to:

- Set high expectations for leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, with the aim that all children attend school every day unless there is a valid reason not to.
- Appoint a named Governor with oversight of attendance to ensure it remains a priority.
- Promote the importance of school attendance across all school policies, practices, and ethos.
- Ensure that school leaders fulfil their statutory responsibilities by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures.
- Ensure the school works effectively with the local authority's Education Welfare Service, as well as other external partners, to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Review and challenge attendance data regularly, supporting school leaders to focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts most in need.
- Ensure that high aspirations are maintained for all pupils, with personalised support in place for:

- Pupils with long-term medical conditions
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with a social worker or youth justice worker
- Pupils from groups with historically lower attendance (e.g., those eligible for free school meals)
- Ensure all staff receive appropriate training on attendance and that relevant staff have opportunities to share and learn from effective practice in other settings.
- Review the Attendance Policy at least annually, ensuring that sufficient resources and structures are in place to fully implement and sustain the policy across the school.

The role of the principal

The principal holds overall strategic responsibility for school attendance and is accountable for ensuring that legal, procedural, and safeguarding obligations are met. Their responsibilities include:

- Ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations relating to school attendance and pupil registration.
- Lead a **whole-school culture** where attendance is recognised as essential for pupil success and wellbeing.
- Ensuring all staff are informed about the Attendance Policy and receive adequate training to address attendance-related matters effectively.
- Overseeing the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensuring it is reviewed regularly in line with national guidance and local needs.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of attendance strategies and evaluating their impact on reducing absence and improving outcomes.
- Providing regular updates to the Governing Body, including termly reports on attendance data, trends, and the effectiveness of interventions.
- Ensuring that all interventions and communications relating to attendance are accurately recorded, using factual, evidence-based information that may be required in any legal proceedings.

- Leading on decision-making regarding legal interventions, including the issuance of Fixed Penalty Notices, in line with DfE guidance and local authority procedures.

The role of the Designated Attendance Lead (Martin Weston)

- Ensuring a whole-school commitment to promoting excellent attendance, supported by engaging teaching and learning that motivates pupils to attend regularly and achieve their full potential.
- Leading positive, proactive strategies to improve attendance, working collaboratively with staff, pupils, and families.
- Supporting class teachers and pastoral staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils, identifying concerns early.
- Leading and coordinating school-wide initiatives such as attendance awards, celebrations, and reward schemes.
- Implementing and maintaining effective systems to report, record, and monitor attendance across the school, including for pupils educated off-site.
- Regularly collecting and analysing attendance data to:
 - Identify emerging patterns or persistent absence
 - Understand underlying causes
 - Develop solutions
 - Evaluate the **impact of interventions**
- Addressing poor or declining attendance by:
 - Applying agreed strategies in partnership with parents/carers
 - Initiating Early Help Assessments where appropriate
 - Delivering targeted interventions and personalised support
- Completing home visits, when necessary, in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

- Ensuring that all interventions, meetings, and communications are precisely recorded, using factual, evidence-based information that may be required for legal proceedings or casework.

The role of the Class Teacher:

- Ensure accurate and timely completion of attendance registers using the school's Management Information System (MIS), applying the correct codes in line with DfE guidance.
- Reporting any concerns about attendance or punctuality to the Attendance Lead or DSL as appropriate.
- Fostering strong relationships with pupils and families, so that pupils feel welcomed, valued, and safe in school.
- Discussing attendance positively with pupils and encouraging them to take ownership of their attendance.
- Recognise and celebrate excellent or improving attendance, both within the classroom and through wider school initiatives.
- Monitor individual and group attendance, identifying pupils with poor or declining attendance and escalating concerns to the Attendance Lead promptly.
- Maintain an overview of class attendance, looking for:
 - Patterns of frequent absence
 - Anomalies or inconsistencies in attendance
 - Unusual explanations from pupils or parents/carers
- Discuss attendance concerns informally with parents as appropriate, and formally during parent evenings when necessary.
- Include individual attendance data (from Insight Tracking) in end-of-year reports to parents/carers to promote transparency and accountability.

The role of the School Administrator:

- Managing all communications from parents/carers relating to attendance and absence, ensuring clear and accurate records are kept.
- Recording all pupil absences on the school's Management Information System (MIS) in a timely and consistent manner, applying appropriate attendance codes in line with national guidance.
- Inputting, monitoring, and analysing attendance data, ensuring accuracy and flagging concerns to the Attendance Lead or Headteacher as required.
- Supporting the administration of attendance-related correspondence, including:
 - Attendance concern letters
 - Notices to Improve
 - Fixed Penalty Notices (when directed by the Headteacher or Attendance Lead)

The role of the Parents/carers:

- Ensure their child attends school every day and arrives before 8:50 am, properly equipped and ready to learn.
- Notify the school before 9:25 am on each day of absence, stating the reason for absence and the expected return date.
- Provide the school with at least two up-to-date emergency contact numbers.
- Provide advance notice for all medical-related absences, wherever possible
- Parents are strongly encouraged to make medical, dental, and other appointments outside school hours.
- Where this is not possible, appointments should be made:
 - Early in the morning so the child can return to school afterwards, or
 - Late in the afternoon so the majority of the school day is not missed.

- Provide proof of medical appointments or treatment when absence occurs during school time. Acceptable evidence may include:
 - Appointment cards
 - Prescriptions
 - Confirmation texts/emails from health services
(Note: A letter from a GP is not required and should not be requested.)
- Encourage and support their child in establishing routines, including:
 - Getting to school on time each day
 - Going to bed at a reasonable hour
 - Preparing school equipment, the night before
 - Talking positively about school and their learning
- Work in partnership with the school and local authority, being open and honest about any challenges or barriers to their child's attendance.
- Submit a Leave of Absence Request Form for all non-medical absences.
 - Leave during term time is not a parental right and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
 - Requests should be made at least four weeks in advance.
 - The decision to authorise or decline a request lies solely with the Headteacher.
- Inform the school promptly if their child is anxious, unhappy, or reluctant to attend, so that early support or intervention can be provided.

Pupils are expected to:

- **Attend school every day and arrive on time**, ready to start learning.
- **Attend all lessons fully prepared**, with the correct equipment, and show a positive attitude to learning.

- **Inform a class teacher or another trusted adult** in school if they are facing any difficulties at home or in school that may affect their attendance or well-being.
- **Follow the school's procedure if arriving late**, by signing in at the main office.

This ensures accurate attendance records and is essential for safeguarding and emergency procedures such as a fire evacuation.

Our Commitment to Attendance

- Although parents and carers hold the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular
- attendance at school, the Headteacher, Governors, and staff at Oakdene Primary Academy work closely with families, professionals, and external agencies to support pupils in developing strong attendance habits.
- We are committed to creating an environment where every child feels safe, valued, welcomed, and supported, and where high attendance is recognised as a key factor in achieving personal and academic success.
- To enable each child to reach their full educational potential, a high level of attendance is essential.
- We consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils, while acknowledging that genuine illness and exceptional circumstances may occasionally prevent this.

As an Academy, we will support good attendance by:

- **Regularly reminding parents and carers** of their legal duty to ensure their child attends school on time, every day the school is open.
- **Raising awareness** of the clear link between attendance and academic achievement — particularly noting that **attendance below 90%** significantly affects pupil progress and outcomes.
- Providing early support and intervention where attendance begins to decline.

- Celebrating and recognising excellent or improving attendance through whole-school rewards and recognition strategies.

Understanding Types of Absence in

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling, and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility, and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the Headteacher (not by the parent), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session.'

Authorised absences

An authorised absence is when a pupil misses a morning or afternoon session of school for a genuine reason, such as:

- Illness (though you may be asked to provide medical evidence),
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours, (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised)
- Emergencies,
- Other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absence

An unauthorised absence is when a child is absent from school without a valid reason and without permission from the Headteacher. These absences are not accepted as reasonable by the school and can result in a referral to the Local Authority, which may lead to penalty notices and/or legal proceedings. Examples of unauthorised absences include (but are not limited to):

- Keeping children off school unnecessarily (e.g. after a late night, or for minor, non-infectious illnesses or injuries that don't impact learning)

- Absences not properly explained by parents/carers
- Arriving at school after the close of registration – this is recorded with a 'U' code, showing the child is on site (for safeguarding), but it counts as an unauthorised absence
- Going on shopping trips
- Staying home to look after siblings or accompanying others to appointments
- Being off for birthdays (their own or a family member's)
- Taking holidays during term time that are not authorised as exceptional by the Headteacher, including those arranged by friends or family
- Taking day trips during the school term
- Any leave of absence not agreed in advance by the school

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is classed as a persistent absentee when their attendance falls to 90% or below, meaning they have missed 10% or more of school across the academic year — whether the absences are authorised or unauthorised.

➤ This level of absence can significantly impact a child's education, learning progress, and social development.

➤ Parents' full support and co-operation is essential in improving attendance for pupils at risk of or already classified as persistent absentees.

Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined as severely absent when they have missed 50% or more of their schooling.

➤ These pupils often face greater barriers to attending school regularly and may require more intensive, targeted support.

- The school will work closely with families and appropriate services to identify issues and help improve attendance.

Absence Procedures

- The school gate opens at 8.40 am, and staff are present to welcome children into school. This allows for staggered access to classrooms.
- The gate will close at 8.55 am. Children who arrive after this time are late and should enter school through the main school entrance. They will be recorded L on the register.
- If arriving at school after the registers close at 9.25 am, pupils will be coded U (late after registration closed). This session is recorded as an Unauthorised absence.
- If your child is going to be absent from school, please contact the school office. The telephone number for the office is 01744678410
- Attendance is recorded electronically using SIMS

If a child is absent from school, the parent/carer must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 09:00 am when registers are taken
- Please be aware that, if you leave a voicemail to report your child's absence, you may receive a call from the school so that we may discuss the absence before deciding as to whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible, and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Expect daily updates regarding when you anticipate your child will return to school. It is your responsibility to contact the school. However, if your child is

absent for a longer period of time, such as an operation, we do not require daily updates

- If we are unable to contact parents by telephone, attempts will be made to all emergency contacts, and a home visit may be made, in accordance with our safeguarding policy
- If absence continues, we may request support from the Educational Welfare Service
- For children when attendance falls below our school target and/or where punctuality is a concern
- Arrange a meeting to allow us to discuss the reasons for the absences and offer support to remove the barriers to attendance, offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate

Five Day Absence

Any pupil who is missing education without an explanation for 10 consecutive sessions (5 days) will be issued with a fixed penalty. School may decide to make a **child protection referral** if it is felt that parents are failing to safeguard their child. A Child Missing Education (CME) referral will need to be issued if contact cannot be made with a parent and the whereabouts of the child is unknown.

Returning to school after an absence.

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. Teachers will ensure that the pupil is supported to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence data

All schools are required to submit daily pupil attendance data to the Department for Education (DfE) in England. This data enables us to monitor attendance patterns, identify concerns at an early stage, and provide appropriate support to individual pupils or groups of pupils.

Persistent or severe absence is closely tracked and monitored. We work proactively to address concerns by combining attendance data with academic tracking, as we recognise that poor attendance negatively impacts pupil attainment and progress.

When a pupil's attendance is at risk of becoming persistent (below 90%) or severe (below 50%), we share relevant information and work in partnership with other local schools, the local authority, and external agencies to support pupils and families. This collaborative approach ensures early intervention and helps to improve outcomes for all pupils.

National Threshold for Penalty Notices

On 19 August 2024, new penalty notices arrangements came into force, with changes to the cost of a penalty notice and to the thresholds at which penalty notices may be requested by a school. The DfE now requires that schools consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate when the thresholds are met.

The changes to be aware of are:

- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be issued at a rate of £160 **per parent, per child**. This amount will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.

A maximum of **two penalty notices** may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period. Upon a **third or subsequent offence, alternative legal interventions** will be pursued. These may include formal prosecution, in line with local authority procedures.

Under the Education Act 1996 and associated regulations, the **Principal** (or an authorised representative), the **Local Authority**, or the **police** may issue a **penalty notice** to parents for the **Considerations Prior to Issuing a Penalty Notice**

- Whether the pupil has accrued **10 sessions of unauthorised absence** within a rolling 10-school-week period.

- These 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) do **not need to be consecutive**.
 - They may consist of any combination of unauthorised absence codes **G (holiday not authorised)**, **O (unauthorised absence)**, or **U (late after registers closed)**.
 - The 10-week period can span different school terms, academic years, or even different educational settings.
- Whether issuing a penalty notice is the most appropriate and effective measure to improve the pupil's attendance.
 - Whether another form of action—such as further pastoral support, a notice to improve, or other legal intervention—would be more appropriate.
 - Whether the school has any duties under the Equality Act 2010 (e.g. regarding disability, special educational needs, or other protected characteristics) that would make issuing a penalty notice discriminatory or inappropriate
 - Unauthorised Leave of Absence:
 - Leave taken without a prior request being submitted to the school.
 - Leave taken after a request has been declined by the school.
 - Excess days taken beyond an agreed leave period, without a valid reason.

The school is committed to working with families to support good attendance. Penalty notices are considered as part of a graduated response and will only be used when appropriate, proportionate, and in accordance with local and national guidance.

Notice to improve

A Notice to Improve is a formal step within the school's graduated response to persistent unauthorised absence. It represents a final opportunity for parents to engage with support and improve their child's attendance before a penalty notice is issued.

Where a pupil has met the national threshold for unauthorised absence (10 sessions in a rolling 10-school-week period), and there has been a lack of engagement with support offered by the school, a Notice to Improve may be issued to allow a final chance for attendance to improve.

Note: A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate (e.g., when the parent is already engaging, or where the circumstances do not warrant it).

Contents of a Notice to Improve

A Notice to Improve will include the following:

- Attendance Record and Offence Details
A summary of the pupil's attendance, including unauthorised absences and the relevant codes used, along with an explanation of how this meets the threshold for intervention.
- Parental Responsibility and Legal Duties
A reminder of the importance of regular attendance and the parent's legal duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure their child receives full-time education.
- Support Provided to Date
A record of the support and intervention already offered or provided by the school, including any communication or meetings held.
- Opportunities for Further Support
Information about further support that remains available or a renewed opportunity to engage with earlier support that was not previously taken up.
- Warning of Potential Penalty Notice
A clear warning that if attendance does not improve during the

improvement period, a penalty notice may be issued, even without further notice. This will include:

- The level of improvement expected (defined on a case-by-case basis).
 - Examples of what would be considered sufficient improvement.
- Defined Improvement Period
A specific timeframe, typically between 3 and 6 weeks, within which improvement must be seen.
- Grounds for Early Enforcement
An explanation of any circumstances under which a penalty notice may still be issued before the end of the improvement period, such as:
 - Further unauthorised absence
 - Failure to engage with support

This process supports a fair and proportionate approach, ensuring that parents are given meaningful opportunities to address attendance concerns before formal enforcement action is taken.

Leave in term time

In accordance with the Department for Education guidance and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, leave of absence during term time will not be authorised unless the Headteacher is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances.

Requesting Leave of Absence

- All requests for leave must be made in writing, using the school's official Leave of Absence Request Form
- Requests must be submitted **at least 4 weeks in advance** of the proposed absence.

- The decision to grant or refuse leave rests solely with the **Headteacher**.
There is no automatic right to take a child out of school during term time, and each request will be considered on its own merits.

Definition of 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are that the event must be:

- Rare
- Significant
- Unavoidable
- Short in duration

'Unavoidable' means the event could not reasonably be scheduled outside of school term time, regardless of who has made the arrangements or incurred costs (including extended family or friends).

Examples of non-exceptional circumstances that will not be authorised include:

- Family holidays
- Trips booked by or for extended family members
- Birthdays, weddings, or family gatherings
- Travel due to convenience or cost

Unauthorised Leave and Penalty Notices

Where:

- A parent removes a child from school after a leave request has been refused, or
- A child is absent during term time, and no request was submitted, or
- The absence goes beyond the dates agreed without explanation,

The absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and a penalty notice may be requested in line with the DfE National Framework for Penalty Notices (2024).

Parents should be aware that unauthorised absence of this nature may result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days, as per current national guidance.

Leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher. Applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, 4 weeks in advance, using the school 'Leave of Absence' request form. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework.

Managing Failure to Return to School by an Agreed Date (Ground H – Removal from Roll)

Where a pupil has been granted leave of absence, failure to return to school by the agreed date—without a valid reason—may result in the pupil being removed from the school roll under Ground H of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Expectations and Parental Responsibility

- Parents/carers are expected to ensure their child returns to school on the date agreed with the Headteacher.
- If a pupil does not return as expected, and there is no acceptable reason (e.g. illness or unavoidable cause), their continued enrolment may be at risk.

The school must be satisfied that it does not have reasonable grounds to believe the pupil is unable to attend due to sickness or another unavoidable cause.

Extension of Leave Due to Exceptional Circumstances

If a pupil is unavoidably detained and cannot return on the agreed date, parents/carers must contact the school immediately to request an extension of leave. This request will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the reason for delay and any supporting evidence provided.

Failure to contact the school or provide a valid reason may result in the pupil's removal from roll, and their place may not be guaranteed upon return.

Removing Pupils from the School Roll

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, schools are legally required to notify the Local Authority of any deletion from the school register, including when:

- The pupil fails to return from leave of absence, and it is determined that they are no longer attending the school; and
- The conditions for removal under Regulation 8(1), Ground (h) have been met:

"The pupil has failed to attend the school within 10 school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave was granted... and the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or any other unavoidable cause."

This notification must be made as soon as the ground for deletion has been met, and no later than the time the pupil's name is removed from the register.

The Role of the Education Welfare Service

In promoting and supporting regular school attendance, the school works in close partnership with the Local Authority Education Welfare Service (EWS). The EWS plays a vital role in supporting both the school and families to address barriers to attendance and ensure pupils receive their full educational entitlement.

Education Welfare Service Support Includes:

- **Monitoring and Improving Attendance:**
Assisting the school in tracking attendance patterns and identifying pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence.
- **Home Visits:**
Carrying out home visits to engage families, assess the reasons for absence, and offer support where appropriate.
- **Family Meetings and Support Plans:**
Attending school meetings with families to discuss attendance concerns, identify underlying issues, and help implement appropriate support plans or issue a Notice to Improve, where necessary.

- **Legal Advice and Enforcement:**
Advising the school on the use of legal interventions under the Education Act 1996, including the issuing of penalty notices and other enforcement options in cases of persistent unauthorised absence.

The Education Welfare Service works collaboratively with the school to ensure that all interventions are proportionate, supportive, and in the best interest of the child, while also fulfilling statutory responsibilities around attendance.

School Processes

The school recognises that consistent attendance and punctuality are vital for pupil progress and well-being. Where attendance or punctuality causes concern, the school will take a graduated, supportive approach in line with national expectations.

Punctuality and Persistent Lateness

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern:

- A meeting will be arranged with the Headteacher and/or Attendance Lead to explore the reasons behind the lateness.
- A support plan will be agreed with parents/carers, with actions monitored and reviewed over a 4-week period.
- All actions and communications will be recorded using CPOMs (Child Protection Online Monitoring system).

If punctuality does not improve following the initial intervention:

- The Pastoral Team may implement further strategies, which may include:
 - Regular "late gate" monitoring at school entrances.
 - Morning "wake-up" calls to support routines at home.
 - Early Help Assessment (EHA) referrals, where more targeted multi-agency support is required.

Persistent Absence and Further Intervention

Where poor attendance continues despite support, the school may escalate its response in partnership with the Education Welfare Service, which could include issuing a Notice to Improve, considering a Penalty Notice, or initiating more intensive family support mechanisms.

The Partnership Between Parents/Carers and School

Promoting excellent attendance is a shared responsibility between the school and families. We believe that a strong, respectful partnership with parents/carers is key to supporting every child's success.

- Parents/carers of children of compulsory school age are legally required to ensure that their child receives full-time education. This includes attending school regularly and on time.
- The school is responsible for promoting good attendance and for taking proactive action when attendance concerns arise.
- Our Home-School Agreement reflects a shared commitment to regular and punctual attendance as an essential foundation for academic progress and social development.
- Parents/carers are also responsible for ensuring their child:
 - Arrives at school by 8.55am
 - Is properly dressed in line with the school uniform policy
 - Is ready to learn, both physically and emotionally
- Parents are expected to work collaboratively with the school, promoting a positive attitude towards education, and showing respect for those who deliver it.

Attendance Awards and Targets

The school believes in recognising and celebrating positive attendance.

The following systems are used to reward good or improved attendance:

- Recognition in the fortnightly school newsletter
- Class-based rewards for the best attendance in each time period
- Praise messages sent directly to parents via Class Dojo when attendance improves

These rewards aim to promote a positive school culture around attendance and highlight the importance of being in school every day.

Attendance Targets

The school sets annual attendance targets in line with national expectations and internal benchmarking. Attendance data is monitored:

- Weekly by the school office
- Half-termly by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team
- In collaboration with the Education Welfare Service, where concerns arise

School Attendance Target for 2025–2026: 97% - Our aim is to work together with families to meet or exceed this target, ensuring every child has the best opportunity to thrive and achieve their potential.

The registration system

The school uses SIMS, which is a computerised system for recording all pupils' attendance. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity

C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
C1	Leave of absence – regulated performance	Authorised absence
C2	Leave of absence - part-time timetable	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending another establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days more than agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence – Interview for employment	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence

S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to attend	Non-compulsory school age
Y1	Unable to attend - normal transport not available.	
Y2	Unable to attend - Widespread travel disruption.	
Y3	Unable to attend - unavoidable partial closure.	
Y4	Unable to attend - unavoidable full closure	
Y5	Unable to attend - criminal justice detention	
Y6	Unable to attend – public health guidance/law	
Y7	Unable to attend - unavoidable other than Y1 – Y6	
-	All should attend	No mark recorded

Register Keeping and Retention

In accordance with the **Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024** guidance and statutory requirements, the school ensures that attendance registers are maintained and retained properly to support accurate record-keeping and compliance with the law.

The school adheres to these requirements to maintain the integrity of attendance data and to ensure compliance with legal obligations for audits, inspections, and any necessary investigations.

Register Security

- All attendance registers are securely stored and maintained on the school's **SIMS** (School Information Management System).
- In the event that a **paper register** is used (for example, due to internet or system outages), it is the responsibility of the **school office** to ensure that all entries are accurately **transferred back into SIMS as soon as possible**.
- This process ensures that attendance records remain complete, up-to-date, and securely stored within the official electronic system.

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable;

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and;
 - [b] To any special needs he may have;
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day- to- day care of the child. The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

2 Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements.
- Field trips and educational visits.
- Sporting activities.
- Link courses or approved education off site.
- Most types of dual registration.

St Helens Local Authority Guidance on Leave of absence for term time holidays:

- Authorisation will be considered in the following *exceptional* circumstances.
- The parent has provided evidence that they are unable to take their holiday during a period of school closure due to their employment.
- The holiday is a unique occasion that can only take place at the time requested. e.g. family wedding.
- A close relative of the pupil is seriously ill, and the holiday proposed is likely to be the last such holiday.
- There has been a bereavement, separation, or other traumatic event in the child's life, and it is considered that an immediate holiday might have a positive impact on the pupil's wellbeing.
- School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as your child attends school as regularly as possible.

The following circumstances are situations where the Head Teacher may consider that the application for leave of absence *may not be granted*:

- The parent has not indicated any special circumstances for the request.
- The period of the holiday clashes with school tests, SATs, or important revision periods prior to them.
- Where the pupil's attendance at school is below 96%.
- Where valuable group work is being undertaken with other pupils in school that cannot be repeated.

- During the first two weeks of a new school on induction, transition, or transfer where the child needs to familiarise themselves with the new school layout and new peer groups are forming.
- During the early part of the first year in a new school when pupils are building new relationships and may experience difficulties settling in.
- There have been previous periods of absence due to holidays and other unauthorised absences.

A minimum of four weeks' notice must be provided for any holidays authorised through the above exceptional circumstances.

Penalty Notices – guidance and new information 2024

Related Policies:

St Helens Council Peoples Service Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

(Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)

Children Missing Education – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities

(September 2016) Department for Education

School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures

(January 2015) Department for Education

Alternative Provision

(January 2013) Department for Education