

04.21.01 Attendance Policy

Owner	School Attendance Champion – Joe Lewis
Date for Review	September 2026
ISI Policy Code	
Scope of policy	EYFS, Pre Prep and Prep School

See *Children Missing in Education Policy/ On and Off Rolling and Missing Child Procedures*.

1.0 Introduction

Regular school attendance from an early age creates a culture about the importance of education and learning so that all can benefit equally. Missing learning time leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and it is well known that poor attendance leads to lower levels of achievement. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, beginning from the Early Years.

2.0 The legal framework

- Legislation specifies the legal responsibility of parent/carer(s) of statutory school age children to ensure they attend school. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient full-time education which is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs, either by regular school attendance or home education.
- The same law requires the school to have an Admissions Register and an Attendance Register, and to place all children on both registers. Failure to do so is an offence. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage requires a daily record of the names of the children being cared for on the premises and their hours of attendance.

3.0 Parent/carer(s) responsibilities

- Encourage regular and punctual attendance, being fully aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that the child in their care arrives punctually, prepared for learning.
- Provide clear reasons for any absence which ensures the school can code the absence properly and accurately.
 - Contact the school on the first day of the child's absence as early as possible and preferably before the start of the school day.
 - Avoid making arrangements to remove children from school during term time.
 - Respond to any enquiry made by the school to ascertain the reason for any absence, including any safeguarding matter

4.0 School responsibilities

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (deemed as attendance below 90%).
 - Work to ensure every pupil has good attendance so he/she can access the education he/she is entitled to.
 - Act early to address patterns of absence.
 - Encourage parents to ensure their child attends all learning opportunities regularly and punctually.
 - Keep accurate and efficient records of attendance and registration at school, including attendance at all after school and before school activities.

We achieve this in the following ways:

- Teachers must take a register at least once in the morning and once in the afternoon;

- Mark all children not present by the designated time, taking account of absence notes;
- Follow up un-notified first day absence with a telephone call to the parent/carer(s) by 09:15.
- Monitor attendance and lateness and implement strategies for promoting improved awareness of attendance such as year groups or vulnerable children, as required, including the use of formal letters home.
- Report on patterns of attendance at Governance Meetings to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- Specifically monitor any persistent absence (individual attendance below 90%);
- Proper use of the DfE national codes to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations, including preservation of the entries on both the Admissions and Attendance Registers for a period of three years after it was made.
- Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence;
- Close discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to identify children causing concern, including interviewing children and parents regarding any unsatisfactory attendance.
 - Close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where there are concerns of children being missing from education – see Children Missing in Education Policy
 - Implementing any agreed improvement strategies, such as referral to the local authority attendance services and/or children’s social care in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures; and
 - Provide parent/carer(s) with the timings of the school day and the calendar via the school website and any other usual method such as the school newsletter, in advance.

5.0 Late arrival

It is essential that, if a pupil arrives late, they should sign in at the school office so our systems remain fully updated in case an evacuation of the school is necessary and in order that we know exactly where every pupil is at all times.

6.0 Leaving school early during the day

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the site during the school day, unless accompanied by a member of staff or their known parent/carer; or to attend a school visit, an off-site scheduled lesson, or a sporting fixture.)
- If a pupil has to leave the school during the day for illness or a parent is required to collect them for a medical appointment, they are required to sign out at the School Office. Where there are known medical appointments parents should notify the school in advance by email.

7.0 Requests for absence from parent/carer(s)

Schools authorise absence. Requests to the school for granting permission for leave of absence to a pupil during term time must be made in writing in advance directly to the Head. The Head is only able to authorise leave of absence where exceptional circumstances relate to the application. Authorised leave is unlikely to be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

- We ask that parents make contact with the school when a child is going to be absent for ill health reasons in order that the school can keep records updated and, importantly, so that the school can be kept informed of their progress to full health and anticipated return date. If necessary, the school may ask for medical evidence of any illness. We expect any absence for illness to be evidenced by a note from the parent/carer(s) as soon as possible.
- An absence is classified as unauthorised if a child is away from school without the permission of the Head in advance.

8.0 Persistent absentees

Persistent absentees are pupils with attendance below 90%. The school will contact the parent/carer(s) if their child’s attendance approaches this threshold. If attendance does not

improve, the school will contact the local authority in accordance with local authority procedures.