



Attendance Policy

Date reviewed:	October 2023	
Approved by:	LGB	March 2024
Next review due by:	October 2024	

For Office Use Only:

Policy Version: 2.0

To make changes to this policy, please
email admin@lincolnshiregateway.co.uk.



Contents

<u>1. Aims</u>	3
<u>2. Legislation and guidance</u>	3
<u>3. Roles and responsibilities</u>	3
<u>4. Recording attendance</u>	5
<u>5. Authorised and unauthorised absence</u>	8
<u>6. Strategies for promoting attendance</u>	9
<u>7. Attendance monitoring</u>	10
<u>8. Monitoring arrangements</u>	11
<u>9. Links with other policies</u>	11
<u>Appendix 1: attendance codes</u>	12
<u>Appendix 2: attendance monitoring flowchart</u>	14

1. Aims

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

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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

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

3.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- 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

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Miss Julia Somerscales and can be contacted via the Academy office on 01469 572 368.

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 school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Principal
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Miss Julia Somerscales, who can be contacted via the Academy office on 01469 572 368. The EWO is Louise Fraser.

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office promptly at the start of the day and after lunch.

3.6 School administration staff

School administration staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the class teachers or pastoral team at an appropriate time, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

The designated administration assistant for attendance is Miss Lynne Fretwell, supported by Miss Michele Swann, Senior Administrator.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, 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

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an 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 during the second session. It will mark 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 if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:45 for Early Years and Key Stage One and 1:30 for Key Stage 2.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff (see also section 7).

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

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

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers 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/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parent/Carer must complete a Leave of Absence form giving at least two full weeks' notice.

The Academy will check legislation and guidance, including what constitutes 'special circumstances' and what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances', and reasons for authorising/not authorising Leave of Absence.

The Academy may telephone the parent/carer if insufficient information is submitted. The Principal may grant or deny the request.

The Academy will complete the 'Reasons for Refusal' on Leave of Absence form.

The Academy will return the form to the parent, files copies of all paperwork as evidence, copy retained for Education Welfare Service.

The Academy will monitor attendance/absence over the appropriate period.

The Academy will inform the Education Welfare Service of related unauthorised absence.

Academy and Education Welfare Service liaise to determine course of action which may include Referral, action towards Penalty Notice, Fast Track to Improving Attendance (up to and including Prosecution).

Please note: All requests for Leave of Absence must be submitted prior to a student's absence, as permission cannot be given retrospectively.

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

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

What time will the gates be opened in the morning?

- The custodians will open the gates at 8.45am.
- All relevant staff should be outside as the gates are opened.
- Staff should greet the parents/children at the gates.
- As the children come in, they must line up in an orderly fashion.
- Children should arrive between 8.45am and 8.50am.

What happens at 8.50am?

- Each class enters the school through their designated entrance.
- All staff connected to the class should leave with the class – preferably, one at the front of the line and one at the back.
- Staff should not wait at the gates for any late arrivals.
- Custodian will begin locking the gates, leaving the main gate until last. The main gate will be closed when the other gates have been locked.

What happens if a child arrives after 8.50am?

- If, for any reason, a class hasn't yet entered the building, the child should join the line as normal.
- If, as in most circumstances, the class has left, the child must enter the school through main reception.
- A child must never be given access to another entrance by any member of staff if the class has left. This is for three reasons:
 1. This could lead to registers being marked incorrectly / not being marked at all, which could result in a phone call being made home which could create panic and distress for a parent/carer. It would also be a negative reflection of our procedures and safeguarding.
 2. It is important that there is a clear routine for any child who is late.
 3. Any child who is late will be recorded as such, which may prompt letters/conversations with parents/carers – this will help keep records accurate.

When must registers be completed by teachers?

- Registers should be taken in silence to ensure accuracy (and for good behaviour).
- They must be taken and submitted by 9.05am, at the very latest.
- The register marks must reflect the children in the class at that time (obviously, this might, on occasions, include a child who has arrived but is out of the classroom for any reason when the register is taken).
- Registers will normally be taken before 9.05am as children will normally leave for assembly before this time.

How should registers be marked for any child who is not present?

- An 'N' mark must always be entered for any child who is not present when the class teacher takes the register.
- If a child arrives late or we are notified of a reason for absence, the correct mark will be entered by a member of the administration team.
- This includes any absence we have been notified about in advance.

What procedures are in place for children who are persistently late?

If a child has been late on **3 occasions**, they will receive a phone call home from the Attendance Officer (Julia Somerscales) or another member of the attendance team. This call should happen as close to the incident of the 3rd lateness as possible and at least within 48 hours (unless close to the end of the week). The caller will outline the following:

- The purpose of the call
- Details of when the child has been late; reasons given for lateness and the times the child arrived
- A discussion to ascertain why this has been the case (and for children who come to school on their own, whether the adult is aware).
- A summary outlining why good punctuality is so important
- Offers of support
- Potential strategies to improve the situation

If a child has been late on **5 occasions**, they will receive a letter from the Attendance Officer. This letter should be sent as close to the incident of the 5th lateness as possible and at least within 48 hours (unless close to the end of the week). The letter will outline the following:

- The purpose of the letter

- Reference to the previous conversation that will have taken place
- Details of when the child has been late; reasons given for lateness; whether the child arrived alone or with an adult and the times the child arrived
- A detailed summary of why good punctuality is so important. This will include an outline of what the child misses every time they are late e.g. assemblies; phonics; reading lessons; as well as a general comment about the damaging impact on progress.
- Potential consequences if there is not an improvement e.g. EWO involvement.
- Request to contact the Attendance Officer to arrange a meeting to look at strategies to support the situation.

If poor punctuality continues with no significant improvement over an agreed period of time, the Attendance Team will meet to discuss next steps which may include the following:

- Possible involvement from the EWO
- A further, more formal letter
- Meeting with the parent/carer and the Attendance Officer and/or the Principal
- Early help support

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/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the call is not answered, we will follow up with a text message to give parents chance to respond. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may ask the Education Welfare Officer to visit or contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels using SIMS In Touch. Parents can access up to date information regarding their child's attendance.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 full weeks' notice before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the Academy office. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Principal, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

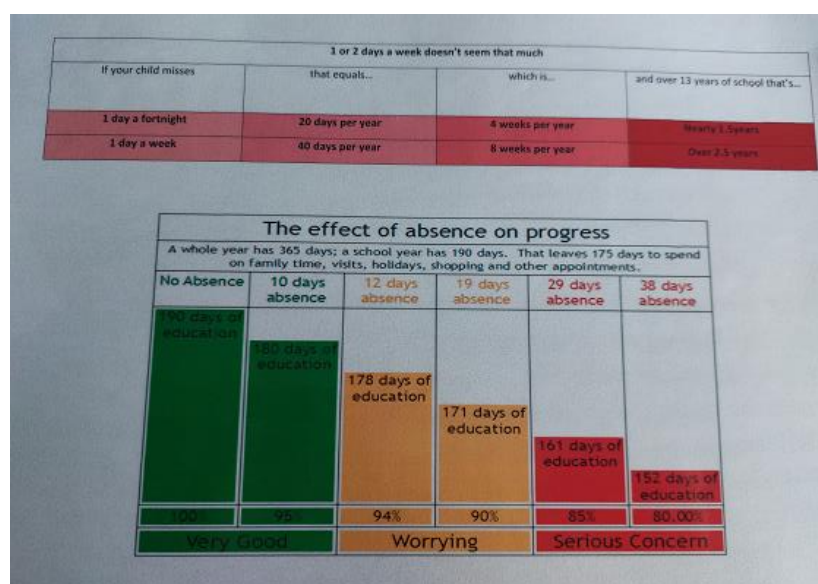
- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance rewards are given through our system of 'Carrot Rewards' – this is part of a wider scheme, where pupils can receive prizes for the number of carrots they receive.

Attendance	100% attendance – every full week	2 carrots
	100% attendance for a full half term	3 bonus carrots
	100% attendance for a full term	6 bonus carrots



The school regularly informs parents about their child's attendance and absence levels at parent consultation meetings.

Teaching assistants also have a performance management target to promote good attendance so individual classes will have their own reward schemes.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The Academy will:

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

Pupil-level absence 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 compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The Academy will:

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

7.4 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.

The school will:

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

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, annually, by the Principal and the Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. 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.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: attendance monitoring flowchart

