

Policy Title:	Attendance Policy	
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Contact:	Name: Mr Andy Poole Title: Deputy Headteacher Name: Mr Darren Oxley Title: Associate Assistant Headteacher Tel No: 01865 774311	
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Created by:	Mr D Oxley, AAHT Attendance and Personal Development	
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<b>Change Record</b>		
Version	Date	Description
1.1	June 2011	Original policy incorporated into complete rewrite as part of review process
1.2	September 2015	Updated
1.3	September 2017	Reviewed and Updated
2.0	March 2018	Original policy incorporated into complete rewrite as part of review process
3.0	June 2020	Complete rewrite of policy
3.1	September 2021	Minor updates plus flowchart

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### 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and good levels of attendance. i.e. Greater than 95%.
- This policy will work within the DfE guidance for best and safe practice concerning the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Recording attendance in relation to coronavirus covid-19 during the 2020 to 2021 academic year](#)

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [DFE School Attendance Guidance July 2019](#)
- [DFE School Attendance Guidance 2020](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### **3. School procedures**

#### **3.1 Attendance register**

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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

**See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes**

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken between 8.45am and 9.10a.m. This will be kept open until 11.20am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 12.35pm and will be kept open until 12.50pm

#### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.40am. (See also section 6).

*Parents should contact the school by using the designated Attendance number:*  
**01865 774311 (option 1)**

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

### 3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

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, but no more than 2 hours.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### 3.4 Lateness and punctuality

It is important for pupils to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons. The start of school/lessons is used to give out instructions or organise work.

- The school day begins at 8.45am and ends at 3.05pm Monday to Friday. Students should be on the school premises by 8.40am.

- From 8.45am to 9.05am duty staff on the gate and will stop any students who are late. The students will stay with the duty staff until the end of tutor at 9.10am. Duty staff will record the names of all students who are late. At 9.05am duty staff will lock the gate and escort the late students to their first lesson by 9.10am. Duty staff will then email the Attendance Officer with the names of late students. Duty staff will also add the names of these students to the Lates spreadsheet (distributed by Pastoral Admin Assistant). Once a student has been late three times (in a half term) the Pastoral Admin Assistant will issue them a detention.

- Lates after 9.05

A member of staff will be on duty from 9.05 to 9.30am to register late students. Lates will be admitted through the Y7 door at the main entrance. All students arriving after 9.05am will be placed in detention that same afternoon (unless they have a valid reason for being late). Y11 students will be sent straight to their lesson. All other year groups will be kept by the main entrance until they can be escorted to the referral room by duty staff, where they will remain in referral for 1 lesson and will be issued with a detention for the same day. Late students arriving after 9.30am will only go through reception to sign in and then wait for duty staff to arrive to collect them and take them to referral. They will be issued with a same day detention.

- Afternoon registration is at 12.30pm and it closes at 12.50pm.

All lateness is recorded daily.

This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.

Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U as per DfE guidance. This mark shows them to be on site but is legally recorded as an absence.

If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded **M**.

Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and may be subject to legal action.

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identifying whether the absence is approved or not, using the correct attendance code.

If no call is received from the Parent/Carer then the Attendance Team/Learning Mentor/Inclusion Team will try to make contact with all absent students via a text or phone call but Parents/Carers are asked to contact the school so that staff are aware that the student is safe and their whereabouts can be accounted for.

The Attendance Office will record reasons for absence on SIMS to notify tutors, teachers, Heads of Years/Learning Mentors and other relevant pastoral staff.

#### **First Day Absence**

Parents/Cares are expected to contact the school on the first day of absence as early as possible giving a reason for the absence and an estimated return to school date.

If no call is received from the Parent/Carer then The Attendance Team/Learning Mentor/Inclusion Team will try to make contact with all absent students via a text or phone call. Parents should be contacting the school to notify of any absences.

The Attendance Office will record reasons for absence on SIMS to notify tutors, teachers, Heads of Years/Learning Mentors and other relevant pastoral staff.

#### **Third Day Absence**

If a student is still away and there has been no contact from the Parent/Carers a home visit will be undertaken to ensure the wellbeing of the student.

#### **Continuing Absence**

If we receive no response, then students are reported as missing pupils to Oxfordshire County Council. The initial contact with Oxfordshire County Council will be made after 10 consecutive school days of no contact with the family or the student.

[\*\*Oxfordshire County Council Children Missing in Education Policy\*\*](#)

#### **Missing Pupil**

Any student who is absent without an explanation after 10 consecutive school days and the school are unable to make contact with the family must be referred to the County Attendance Team and provision (through the use of internal or external support eg. LCSS, Police, School Attendance Team) is made to ensure a home visit is conducted and the missing child is 'sighted'.

### [Child Missing In Education - DfE guidance](#)

#### **4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

##### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The following may be considered examples of 'exceptional circumstance':

- A funeral of a parent, grandparent or sibling
- Transport not provided by the LA when it should have been
- Children of service personnel who are about to go on deployment

The school also lists reasons for which absence will not be authorised, such as:

- Birthdays
- Incidents of bullying
- The death of a pet

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- 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

##### **4.2 Unauthorised absence**

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A student's/family member's birthday
- Shopping
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET or other purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Family holidays.

### **4.3 Legal sanctions**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

[\*\*Oxfordshire County Council - Issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools\*\*](#)

## **5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to other pupils. This will be the responsibility of the Pastoral Team to facilitate the communication with the teaching staff to ensure missed work is made available where practical.

Where the pupils find a return to school challenging after a prolonged absence, support maybe offered through some of following opportunities:

- Discussion with parents and students
- Attendance panels
- Parenting contracts
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies
- Learning mentor support
- Student voice activities
- Friendship groups
- PSCHE
- Reward systems
- Time limited, part time time-tables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- SEND provision - Inclusion
- Reintegration support packages
- Space for Learning support

## **6. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

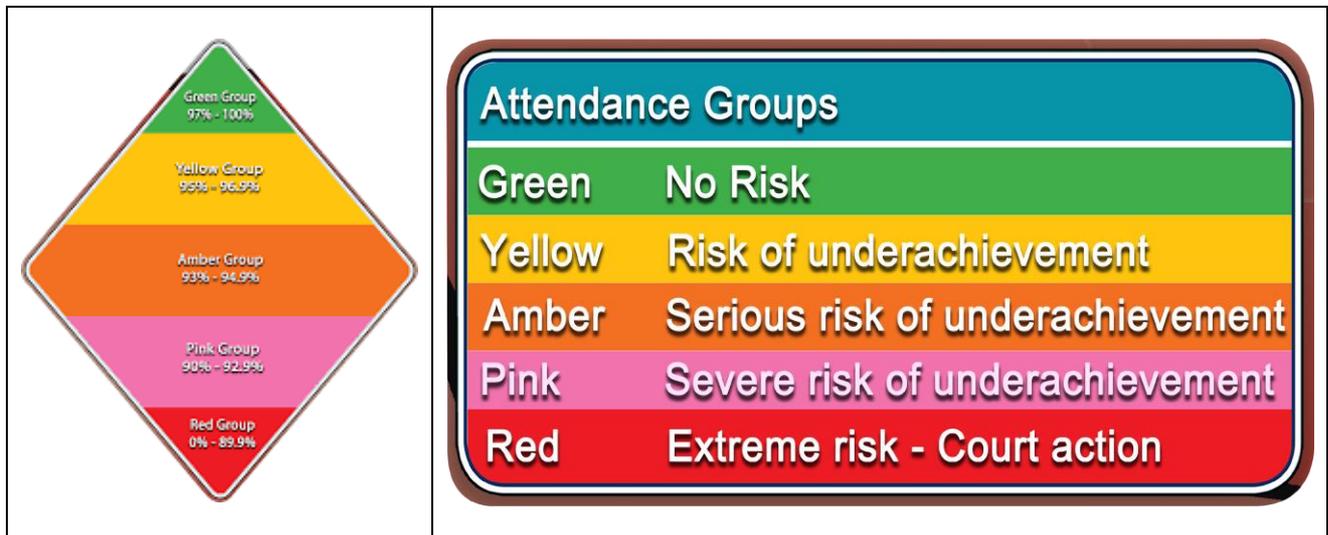
If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days a home visit will be conducted to establish the reasons for their absence; if after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will look to apply supportive measures.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Data is monitored and tracked through the use of SIMS and the SOL tracker. Students are categorised by their attendance in accordance with the SOL diamond.

## **SOL Attendance Diamond – Attendance Actions**



The school will respond to this data with the following hierarchy of sanctions:

- i. Tutor Conversation – 97% - 100%
- ii. LM Call Home – 95% - 96%
- iii. Letter 1 - General Concern 93% - 94.9%
- iv. Letter 2 - LM Meeting - 93% - 94%
- v. Letter 3 - AO Meeting - 90% - 92.9%
- vi. Letter 4 - HOY/SLT/Inclusion Team Meeting - below 90%
- vii. Referral to the County Attendance and Inclusion Team
- viii. Application for Penalty Notice – Holiday
- ix. Application for Penalty Notice – Non attendance

***All percentage targets and actions will be subject to individual analysis of and appropriate actions in conjunction with the student's needs and circumstances.***

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

### 7.1 The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### 7.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### 7.3 Attendance Lead

- To work with County Inclusion and Attendance team to tackle persistent absence

- To advise the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- To analyse attendance data to inform and update planning by the SLT and Governing Body
- To support and lead pastoral staff with relevant actions around attendance
- To monitor attendance safeguarding requirements

#### **7.4 The Role of the Form Tutor**

- To mark the register by 8.55 a.m. daily
- To return any notes regarding absence to the Attendance Office
- To monitor attendance and punctuality of students in their tutor group
- To discuss attendance issues/ concerns with the student
- To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns

#### **7.5 Role of the Subject Teacher**

- To mark a register each lesson within the first 15 minutes of the lesson starting
- To inform Attendance Office/Referral (C3 email) of any student missing from the lesson and mark absences on SIMS
- To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns
- To ensure that missed work is caught up

#### **7.6 The Role of the Head of Year**

- To review attendance of their year group weekly
- To review Persistent Absence list weekly and take action as appropriate to improve attendance
- To meet regularly with one of Line Manager/Attendance Team to discuss actions with regards to students whose attendance falls below 90%
- To ensure letters are sent home where there are attendance concerns
- To organise and oversee the support for students who have been on long term absence

#### **7.7 The Role of the Attendance Officer/Junior Attendance Officer**

- To provide Heads of Year and Heads of Department with weekly attendance reports from SIMs
- To provide the Heads of Year/Learning Mentors with daily 'absence lists'.
- To prepare a weekly Persistent Absence list for SLT/Heads of Year/Head of Departments
- To telephone home on a student's first day of absence if this is not previously explained
- To carry out a home visit if there is no parental contact within three days.
- To follow up absences and address concerns with students and agree on strategies to improve attendance

### **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the SLT. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## 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
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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

<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day