



Attendance Policy

Reviewed: September 2024

Next review due: September 2025

1. Aims

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

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

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.

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:

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The proprietor

The proprietor is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - o Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register.
 - o Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.

- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritizing staff and resources.
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - o The importance of good attendance.
 - o That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues.
 - o The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
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3.2.The headteacher

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Working with the parents of pupils with SEND to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.

3.3.The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.

- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies where needed.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Kate Baguley and can be contacted via kbaguley@salterfordhouse.co.uk .

3.4.Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office before 9.30am.

3.5.School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on CPOMs
- Record attendance information in the tracking file.
- Inform class teachers and the designated attendance leader of absences.

3.6.Parents

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

- All natural parents, where they are married or not.
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (ie. lives with and looks after them).

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure the 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 advice when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with a minimum of 2 emergency contact details for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance by contacting the school office by emailing office@salterfordhouse.co.uk or phoning 0115 965 2127.

3.7.Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day.
- Share information about anything that is preventing them from attending school every day with a trusted adult.

4. Recording attendance

4.1.Attendance register

By law, all schools 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 education activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- (For pupils of compulsory school age) Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of the circumstances where a pupil is 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.

Every entry made in the attendance register will be preserved for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.50am and ends at:

- 3.30pm for pupils in Pre-Prep, Year 1, Year 2 and The Hive.
- 3.45pm for pupils in Year 4 and Year 5.
- 3.55pm for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.50pm and will be kept open until 1.55pm.

4.2.Unplanned Absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day on an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents should email (office@salterfordhouse.co.uk) or phone the school office on 0115 965 2127.

Absence due to illness or mental health will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity is in doubt, the school, or where the absence is longer than 5 days, 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.

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

4.3.Planned absence

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

Parents should email or phone the school office to give notice of, and reason for, the intended absence.

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.

Parents should notify the school office by email if their child has a medical appointment during school time.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absences as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 5 includes further information about which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

4.5 Following up unexplained or unauthorised absence

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

When a child is absent and a reason has not been provided by 9am, the school will attempt to make contact with the parent/carer of the child. If contact cannot be made, the school will attempt to contact the emergency contacts provided by the parent/carer. If there is reason to believe that the child may be in danger, we may choose to contact the Nottinghamshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub to seek further advice.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Children's attendance is reported to parents at the end of each term on the school report. Where attendance is lower than is deemed acceptable (below 90%), a short statement will be included to explain the importance of attendance. If absence falls below 80% and the reason for this is not clear, or absence falls below 90% consistently, parents may be invited into school to discuss the absence and create a Positive Attendance Plan to improve attendance.

4.7 When a Child is Absent from School

In the first 12/24 hours:

1. The School Office staff will contact the first named contact on record.
2. If this is unsuccessful, the School Office staff will contact the next named person(s) on record.
3. If all contact numbers have been exhausted, then the School Office staff will email all parents/carers in order as above.
4. With all contacts exhausted the School will wait for a response from the parent/carer.
5. The Head and DSL will be informed of an unexplained absence.
6. The School Office will follow up every day the pupil is absent.
7. The School Office will follow up with a phone call after 3 days if contact has or has not been made.
8. After 3 days and no contact has been received by the pupil or carers the following actions will be taken:
9. The DSL will alert the local safeguarding team for the child's home address and await and act on the advice given. This will be fully documented.
10. Records will be maintained of attempts to contact all relevant parents/carers.
11. If there are repeat occasions or any safeguarding concerns, the DSL will be informed.

The School will have two emergency contact details for each child.

We undertake to look after the child safely throughout the time that he or she remains under our care and will ensure that every reasonable action is taken to actively promote the welfare of our pupils.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1.Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain education activities, or to attend other schools and settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the reason for the absence is defined as exceptional circumstances.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for family holiday in the school holidays. This must be supported by documentation from the organisation.
- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- Farming families, whose work patterns mean they cannot holiday during the summer months.
- 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.
- To attend religious festivals or services such as the wedding or funeral of an immediate family member.
- Other compassionate circumstances e.g. family illness, family crisis such as a marriage break-up.
- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional illness. Evidence must be provided from a qualified professional, such as a doctor.
- Where there are other factors which the Headteacher may consider exceptional circumstances, this may be referred to the Local Authority for advice.
- It should be noted that financial considerations are not deemed exceptional circumstances.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account 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 (including mental health illness).
- medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3.
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set aside 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. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes

and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

- if the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

6. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

When a pupil has been absent for a lengthy period due to mental or physical ill health or has complex barriers to attendance, we will work with the family to create a plan to allow the child to return to school in a way which is not distressing for them and allows them to integrate in a healthy and sustained way.

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

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1. Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. Attendance information may be shared with external agencies responsible for a child's wellbeing, including but not limited to The Virtual School, social care, CAMHS and The Early Help Unit.

The school will benchmark its attendance data against national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

7.2. Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils and families that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence and
- Conduct thorough analysis of termly and full-year data to identify patterns and trends and
- 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 school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence of individual pupils and the school body that is has identified via data analysis.

- Provide targeted support to the pupils and families it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with local authorities where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's policy for improving attendance.

The school will:

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

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the member of senior leadership responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the headteacher and proprietor.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

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
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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