



**GREATFIELDS SCHOOL**

# **Attendance And Punctuality Policy**

**Approved by SLT:**

**Date: September 2024**

**Approved by Local Governing Board:**

**Date:**

**Next Review Date:**

**September 2026**



Partnership Learning



## 1. Aims

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

- 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

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 attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), which includes the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. This document is 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](#)

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





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 in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:37 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:40 and will be kept open until 9:00. The register for the second session will be taken at 11:30 and will be kept open until 11:40.

### **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 8:40 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Please call the school on 020 3946 5900

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.

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.

### **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.

Please call the school on 020 3946 5900, or bring a letter to reception.

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

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Arriving to school on time is of the upmost importance. This is frequently messaged through assemblies and form time and monitored by the pastoral team who will give one hour detentions for repeated lateness to school.

### 3.5 Following up 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.

### 3.6 Reporting to parents

Your child will receive a written report including attendance information twice during the academic year. Attendance information can also be accessed via the My Child at School for parents (MCAS) app from Bromcom.

## 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'.

If a parent believes that they need an absence for special circumstances, they should contact their child's Head of Year. Only a member of SLT can authorise an absence for 'exceptional circumstances.'

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
- Term time holiday will not be approved.





## 4.2 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 £80 within 21 days or £160 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.

More information and guidance can be found [here](#) regarding legal action to enforce school attendance.

## 5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Greatfields rewards good attendance via assemblies, trips, rewards evenings, etc. We will always seek to work with families to avoid undue absences.

## 6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a weekly 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).

Parents are expected to call the school each day a child is ill.

If a pupil's absence goes above 2 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

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.





We collect attendance data on all students and use it to track attendance of individual students. We will support students in need of support.

## 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 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### 7.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the most up to date guidance from the DFE, and submitting this information to the school office via Bromcom.

### 7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

### 7.6 Pastoral staff

Pastoral staff are expected to make follow up calls to parents about the absences and record it on the school system.





## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher for behaviour and attendance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding 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
K	Education provision	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
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>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Granted in exceptional circumstances
<b>C1</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education.
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>J1</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Where a pupil is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and they have not done so
<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>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them
<b>Y1</b>	Transport normally provided not available	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and







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		the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available
Y2	Travel disruption	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
Y3	School premises closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.
Y4	Whole school site closed	School is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Pupil is in criminal justice detention	
Y6	Public health guidance	The pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	Where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question.
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
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





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Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
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

