



Education Trust

Inspiring the individuals of today, for a better society tomorrow

“Aspire, Belong, Collaborate”

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Review Frequency	Annual
Reviewed	19.12.2025
Next Review	December 2026
Agreed by Trustees	19 th December 2025



RATIONALE

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where pupils feel valued and welcome. Working in partnership with our families plays a huge part in making our schools so successful. Parents and staff share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital children are at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. Good attendance promotes academic progress, building relationships with peers and staff and future aspirations

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 and punctuality
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure they have the support in place to attend school

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of [the working together to improve school attendance \(19th August 2024\)](#) 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.

RIGHTS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The trust board

The trust board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the trust's policies and ethos



- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the CEO to account for the implementation of this policy

Heads of School

The Heads of School are responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or delegating authority to a member of the Strategic Leadership Team to do so
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

Designated senior leader for attendance (also known as the 'senior attendance champion')

The senior leader/ senior attendance champion 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
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is:

Oldway Primary School - Emma Bamber, 01803 557190.

Roselands Primary School – Pippa Bastock, 01803 525375.

Shiphay Learning Academy is Karen Duke, 01803 613556.

The Attendance Team

The wider attendance team is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- 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 Head of School
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Head of School when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer for:

Oldway Primary School is Eva Rowe, 01803 557190.

Roselands Primary School is Helen Braund, 01803 525375.

Shiphay Learning Academy is Karen Duke, 01803 613556.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis via Arbor in accordance with the policy, using the correct codes
- Sharing attendance data and discussing this during parents' meetings
- Liaising with the attendance team regarding academic progress to share with parents

SENDCO

The SENDCO will:

- Liaise with class teachers and the attendance team to monitor the attendance of children with Education Health and Care Plans
- Work with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (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
- Communicate with the local authority when a pupil with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

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
- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead of any children absent on a Child Protection or Child in Need plan
- Work as part of the attendance team supporting in recording data and managing the information that needs to be sent to parents.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure that their child attends school every day on time



- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.45am 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 and evidence for the appointment is shared with school
- Be aware of their child's attendance data via the Arbor app (when this becomes available to parents).

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school, every day by 8.45am

RECORDING ATTENDANCE

Attendance register

We will keep an electronic 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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

Please see appendix for list of register codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.45 a.m. and ends at 3.15 p.m.



Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45 a.m. on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45 a.m. and will be kept open until 9.05 a.m. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00 p.m. for KS1 and 1.15 p.m. for KS2.

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 8.45 a.m. or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office.

Acceptable reasons for the authorisation of absences may be as follows:

- Illness
- Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement
- Days of religious observance
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- 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.

This list is not exhaustive

Illness

Medical evidence may be requested where a pupil has been absent due to illness OR where a pupil's attendance is below 95% and/or the pupil is regularly away from school due to illness. Failure to provide evidence when requested may result in the absences being recorded as unauthorised.

Medical evidence can be in the form of a copy of a prescription, medication, email, text message or an appointment card showing the name of the child and date they visited. If a child is diagnosed with a medical condition, evidence should be provided. Referral to School Nurse may be made to offer advice and support to the family.

Unavoidable Medical/Dental appointments

All routine (non-emergency) appointments should be made, wherever possible, outside of school hours. Should a pupil need to have an appointment during school hours, evidence of this will need to be provided. Failure to provide evidence may result in the school recording the absence as unauthorised.

LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY

A pupil who arrives late:

- If a pupil arrives late, but before 9.05 a.m. they will be marked as late (L)
- If a pupil arrives after 9.05 a.m. they will be marked as absent for that session (U)



Should we have particular concerns about an individual pupil's attendance or punctuality a member of staff will speak to the parents directly. The school will endeavour to work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern. All pupils' attendance records will be checked every half term for lates before registers close (L) and lates after registers close (U). Where either of these late arrivals cumulate to 5 or more in a half term the school will contact the parents/carers of the pupil in question to discuss any support needs and ways of accessing support.

FOLLOWING UP UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will follow the process outlined below:

- If the school has not had any contact from the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of an absence to ascertain the reason, the school will send a 'call text' as soon as possible.
- If no response is received school will continue to try to make contact by telephone and email
- If no response has been received during the morning, then school members of staff will visit the home to try and meet with the parents/carers in person.
- If there is no response and there are concerns about the child's whereabouts and wellbeing, the school will contact other services for advice e.g. the Torbay Education Safeguarding Service (TESS), Police, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), Children's Services.
- If after 10 days, the child has continued unauthorised absence and there has been no contact from parents/carers, a Child Missing in Education (CME) referral will be made to the Attendance Improvement Service.
- If the pupil is subject to a Child Protection plan or if the school has particular safeguarding concerns and feels the child is at risk of immediate harm, the school will immediately notify the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) without waiting for 10 school days.
- A child may be referred to the MASH if it is considered that they have totally disengaged from learning and/or the parent is subject to statutory intervention.

REPORTING TO PARENTS/CARERS

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents are able to view their child's current attendance via Arbor.

AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

APPROVAL OF TERM TIME ABSENCE

Approval for term-time absence

The Head of School will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.



The Head of School will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#).

A leave of absence is granted at the Head of School'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. **As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.**

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated using the school's Absence Request form. The Head of School may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an off-site approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

LEGAL SANCTIONS

Penalty notices

The Head of School, (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice. If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.



Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence. The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days. A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period



STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

School staff will work together to celebrate good and improved attendance and share this with families, including certificates, postcards, phone calls and emails/Seesaw messages.

MONITORING ATTENDANCE

The school 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.

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

USING DATA TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE

The school will:

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

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.

Whole school attendance will be monitored regularly and the following actions taken:



- **Attendance 1 letter** will be sent out advising that their child's attendance has dropped below 95%.
- **Attendance 2 letter** will be sent out if attendance does not improve, inviting parents/carers into a meeting with the attendance team. At this point parents/carers may be asked to enter into a Parenting Contract with the school.
- **Attendance 3 letter** will be sent if parents/carers do not attend the meeting and/or there is still no improvement following letters 1 and 2, inviting parents/carers into a meeting. This may be escalated to the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Officer.
- If, at any time, a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences equating to 10% within a 6 month period, the school should attend a legal consultation with the Local Authority to consider legal options available. Legal options include: Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders, School Attendance Orders and Prosecution. Please see the Local Authority website for further details.



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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Absent – other authorised reasons

T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made

Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention



Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2: attendance letter 1 (on school letterhead)

Name & address of parent(s)

Date

Dear *name(s) of parent(s)*

Re: *name of pupil* - Attendance *xx* %

At *name of school*, we are committed to providing high quality education and improving outcomes for all our children. In order for a child to reach their full potential, we expect a high level of attendance at school, so they are able to maximise their learning and achievement.

As you will see, our records show your child's attendance in school has fallen below the school target of *xx* %. It is appreciated that children sometimes become unwell, but it is important to be aware of how this can be managed and improved.

We will continue to monitor your child's attendance and, with your co-operation, I would anticipate an improvement. If you wish to discuss this matter further, or would like support please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Name of staff member

Family Support Worker/DSL

90% attendance = half a day missed each week
90% attendance over 1 school year = 4 weeks of school missed
90% attendance over 5 school years = ½ a school year missed



Appendix 3: attendance letter 2 (on school letterhead)

Name & address of parent(s)

Date

Dear *name(s) of parent(s)*

Pupil's Name: *name of pupil*

Pupil DOB: *date of birth of pupil*

You may recall the attendance letter dated (*insert date of attendance letter 1*) expressing concern with (*Name of pupil*)'s current level of attendance. Since then, there has not been the anticipated improvement, therefore we would like to invite you to a meeting in school as follows:

Date: *insert date*

Time: *insert time*

This meeting will give us the opportunity to look at the issues causing irregular school attendance and if appropriate, put in a suitable support plan to help with this.

If you are not able to attend the above appointment, please contact the school as soon as possible so that an alternative date can be arranged.

Attached is a copy of (*name of pupil*)'s attendance record for your information, which will form part of our discussion during the meeting.

Due to (*name of pupil*)'s continued irregular school attendance, we require medical confirmation to support any future absences.

Please note that failure to ensure regular attendance could result in future legal proceedings by the Local Authority under Section 44 of the Education Act 1996.

Thank you for your support and help in this matter, and we look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

Name of staff member

Family Support Worker/DSL



Appendix 4: attendance letter 3 (on school letterhead)

Date

Address

Dear *name(s) of parent(s)*

Re: (*Name of pupil*)'s Attendance *xx*%

As you are aware from the previous letter, we have been monitoring (name)'s attendance very closely. His/Her attendance record states that he/she only attended on (number) sessions out of a possible (*number*), which gives an overall attendance figure of (*percentage*)%.

This as you can appreciate is a cause for concern, as Government guidelines state that average attendance in school is 95%.

I must inform you that future absences cannot be authorised without evidence - attendance will continue to be closely monitored from this point.

Where a child accumulates 10 or more unauthorised absences (the equivalent of 5 school days) within any six-month period, parents/carers will make themselves liable to receiving a Penalty Notice per parent/per child or a court Summons.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Name of staff member

Family Support Worker/DSL



DETAILS OF AMENDMENTS

September 2018

- Updated to include Shiphay Learning Academy

July 2019

- Updated to recognise different designations in different schools by adding “or attendance officer” (p4 and p6)
- P7 strategies for promoting attendance **may** include to recognise the different strategies used at different schools.

May 2021

- Reviewed without change.

March 2023

- Policy updated with exemplar letters.

January 2024

- Remove appendix letters

October 2024

- Amended to reflect statutory legislation [Working together to improve school attendance \(19th August 2024\)](#)
- Amended to reflect responsible staff
- Amended to show change from Scholar Pack to Arbor.

December 2025

- P2 Amended pronoun ‘your child’ changed to ‘children are’
- P3 ‘Governing board’ amended to ‘trust board’
- P3 ‘Head of School’ changed to ‘CEO’
- P3 staff names updated and email addresses removed
- P4 email addresses removed
- P6 minor formatting change
- Attendance letters 1, 2 & 3 added as appendices

