T.I.M.E

Logic House

138 Central Street

St Helens

WA10 1UD

Tel: 01744 808040

enquiries@thisismyeducation.org.uk

Headteacher: Jillian Fairclough

jillianfairclough@thisismyeducation.org.uk

Facebook: This Is My Education

Student Attendance Policy

Approved by:	J Fairclough	**Date:** Sept 2023
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Contents

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)](), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

> Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students

> Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance

> Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

> Ensuring every student 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 make sure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)]() and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)]()

> [The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024]()

> [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment]()

It also refers to:

> [School census guidance]()

> [Keeping Children Safe in Education]()

> [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools]()

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for:

> Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents/carers

> Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:

- o Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority

- o Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific students, 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 students who need it most by prioritising staff and resources

> Making sure the school has high aspirations for all students, but adapts processes and support to students' individual needs

> Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students 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 students' 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 legal requirements for keeping registers

- 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 students, 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

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> The 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 students

> Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so

> Working with the parents/carers of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with SEND, including

where school transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-school barriers

> Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs

> Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents/carers through all available channels

> Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:

  o Notifying the local authority when a student's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times

  o Providing the local authority with the details of students who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days

  o Providing the local authority with the details of students who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader Jillian Fairclough 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 students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed

> Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues

> Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers

> Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Jillian Fairclough and can be contacted via telephone 01744 808040

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 headteacher

The attendance officer is Sue Murphy and can be contacted on 01744 808040

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors 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 by 10.00 am and 1.10 pm

3.6 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

> Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

> Transfer calls from parents/carers to the pastoral lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

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

> All natural parents, whether 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 (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

> Make sure their child attends every day on time

> Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.45 am 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 2 emergency contact number for their child

> Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

> Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

> Attend every timetabled session, on time

> Call the school to report their absence before 8.45 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all students 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 (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every student 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:

- For students of compulsory school age whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a student 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 and ends at 3.00.

Students must arrive in school by 8.45 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00 and will be kept open until 9.30. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00 and will be kept open until 1.30.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.45, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via telephone 0 1744 808040

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

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents should contact the office to inform the attendance officer and provide medical evidence before or straight after the appointment

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

The student's parent 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.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student 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 absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

> Call the student's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may complete a home visit.

> 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 3 working days after the session(s) for which the student was absent

> Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

> Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the student's youth offending team officer

> Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents to improve attendance

> Identify whether the student needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

> Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via half-termly written reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a student to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 6 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the staff office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.   If a student is over the compulsory school age, leave can be requested and agreed by the student or parent that they normally live with.

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

- Illness (including mental-health 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 student'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 student is attending educational provision
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

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

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the student is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

TIME follows an attendance strategy to ensure all absence is followed up in a consistent and robust manner in the interests of promoting good attendance and safeguarding all students.

We have a system of rewards and sanctions to respond to lateness and punctuality.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) monitors student 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 by 8.45am and provide updates as necessary for longer periods of absence. If parents do not make contact school will make contact via telephone, text or with a home visit.

7. Supporting students who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Students absent due to complex barriers to attendance

TIME work with parents and LA to support young people with complex barriers to education and have the ability to offer part time timetables to support young people back into education. TIME have a full time SENCO and family liaison offer who can support learners back into education with a robust and personalised learning plan.

7.2 Students absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

TIME offer a range of wrap around support to learners who may be facing mental or physical illness. We carryout assessments on entry and can implement support systems within their academic timetables.

Where a student 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 student's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Students returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

We offer students part time timetables to support students back into education in agreement with parents/carers and LA. This gets reviewed on a 6 weekly basis to ensure that this is a short-term plan to improve student attendance and engagement.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student, year group and cohort level.

Specific student information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and

- Identify students whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence

- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual students, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

- Provide targeted support to the students it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors, to facilitate discussions with students and families, and to the governing board and school leaders including special educational needs co-ordinator, and designated safeguarding lead

- 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 other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy 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 students who the school (and/or local authority) 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 at school

  o Listen, and understand barriers to attendance

  o Explain the help that is available

  o Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence

  o Review any existing actions or interventions

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant

> Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these students. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence

> Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 2 years by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. 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)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Student 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	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Student is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Student 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	Student is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment

J1	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Student has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Student is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Student is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Student is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Student 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	Student is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Student 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	Student is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Student 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 student absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Student is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Student'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	Student 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	Student has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

Z	Prospective student not on admission register	Student 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

<p align="center">**TIME Attendance Action Plan September 2024**</p>

Day 1

- FDR (First Day Response) telephone call - if no answer send a text/email.
- Log contact including reason for absence on CPOMS and code register accordingly.

Day 2

- As day 1 (unless safeguarding concerns*)

Day 3

- If still no response to FDR, seek authorisation from Teacher in Charge for a home visit. Leave **calling card** if no answer.
- Send **letter 1** within 24 hours (planned home visit, including time and date of the visit) – email preferable
- Log all activity on CPOMS, attaching copy of letter 1.
- DAY 3 ABSENCE SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED BY ADMIN INPUTTING MIS AND TEACHER IN CHARGE ALERTED

Ist planned home visit (NB ensure Home Visit risk assessment procedures followed)

- Make every attempt to see the student, offer support to help attendance improve
- If you have any concerns arrange a time and place to meet, preferably in a teaching base
- Send **letter 2** within 24 hours, including time, date, place of meeting and invite any interested professionals (school, social worker etc)

Meeting (as per letter 2)

- Complete **Attendance Support Plan/Medical Needs Support Plan/NIROFTE papers –** invite EWS to support if available
- Offer any relevant support
- Consider if EHAT should be initiated (seek advice from Jillian Fairclough or Teacher in Charge if uncertain)

If meeting 1 not attended

- Send **letter 3** within 24 hours giving time, date and place for **meeting 2** (to be arranged within 5 working days)
- Teacher in Charge to seek advice from EWO – is a referral to EWS appropriate at this point or follow EWS advice.

If meeting 2 not attended

- Complete **CPOMS** and alert DSL.
- Jillian Fairclough and DSL will advise on next steps, seeking advice from EWO if necessary

IMPORTANT NOTES

Until the child is seen continue with unannounced visits, leaving calling cards.

*Start to make unplanned visits immediately if you have any safeguarding concerns.

Telephone calls, texts, emails, letters sent and visits should be recorded on CPOMS.

See if you can undertake joint visits with another partner agency that maybe working with the family.

If child has not been seen for 2 weeks leave a calling card informing parent/carer that a safeguarding referral will be made to social care and the police will be contacted. Advise headteacher and the designated safeguarding lead if this is the case.

You will have a chronology and a graduated response to evidence how you have tried to address non-attendance.