# Attendance Policy

| Approved by: | S. Casey |
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| Last reviewed on: | 1st September 2025 |
| Next review due by: | 31st August 2026 |

# Contents

# 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.

# 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 Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

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

# Roles and responsibilities

## ReEngagEd Ltd

The ReEngagEd Ltd is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the commissioning schools and MCC through the IRIS system
  - 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
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - 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

## The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the relevant stakeholders

- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students

- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Ensuring that the referral school is provided with information to make decisions regarding issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so

- Working with the parents 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 plan (EHCP) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the students's needs

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

## The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The headteacher is also the designated senior leader for attendance and 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 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 Steve Casey and can be contacted by phoning 07927 339 318.

## The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Completing the daily register

- Sharing daily attendance information for each student with referring schools and updating the IRIS system

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

- Carry out daily welfare and attendance calls for any student who is not in school (if the parent/carer has not already made contact themselves)

- Inform referring parents/carers and the referring school if a student needs to be sent home for any reason.

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports and reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher

- Working with education welfare officers and other agencies to tackle persistent absence

- Providing information to the referring school in order for them to make decisions on when to issue fixed penalty notices

The attendance officer is Steve Casey and can be contacted on 07927 339 318.

## 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 9.30 am on the first 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
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by working in partnership with the school.

## Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time.

# Recording attendance

## Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all students onto this register. This will be shared with the attendance team and designated member of staff overseeing placements for students elected by the commissioning school. An additional register on IRIS will also be taken for students. All codes on the IRIS system will be the same as the electronic version shared with the commissioning school.

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:

- 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 10am and ends at 2 pm. All students must arrive in school by 10am on each school day.

Our students often live a significant distance from the school and different methods of public transport allow them to arrive at different times. To ensure that students do not miss the first session of the school day, we request that all students to arrive for 9.30am, despite the fact that the school day does not officially start until 10am. Between 9.30 am and 10am we will deliver an additional session (daily discussions and breakfast).

The register for the first session will be taken at 10am and will be kept open until 10.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12 noon and will be kept open until 12.30 pm.

## 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 9.30 am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school attendance officer, who can be contacted on 07927 339 318

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 5 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.

## Planned absence

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

Leaves of absence should be requested verbally by speaking to the headteacher in the first instance. A decision will then be made to grant or decline this request or ask for the request to be put in writing for further consideration.

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.

## 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 unauthorized absence, using the appropriate code

Strategies for addressing poor attendance are set out in our attendance strategy which is available upon request.

## Following up unexplained 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. Phone calls home will be made by the attendance officer, headteacher, proprietor or someone that has specifically been delegated this responsibility as soon as it becomes apparent that a student is not attending.

ReEngagEd Ltd will send daily attendance records to referring schools who will follow their own procedures for dealing with any attendance issues. The referring school will have responsibility for liaising with the LA and arranging for any penalty fines. ReEngagEd Ltd should be kept informed of any actions taken by the referring school.

ReEngagEd Ltd will, when needs and resources permit, carry out home visits to follow up on any non-attenders. When this happens records will be kept and the referring school will be informed. If the referring school wishes for additional home visits to take place they must take responsibility for this and should inform ReEngagEd Ltd of the outcome.

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 leave a voicemail or text message requesting that the parent/carer makes contact. If there are any safeguarding concerns the school will carry out a home visit or request that the student's referring school does this.

- 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 5 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 or social worker

- 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, we will ask the referring school to consider whether to take further action in line with their legal powers.

As a school with limited places we strive to support those students who we are most likely to be able to help. Therefore, if a student's attendance is not sufficient during their two trial period, the placement will not be confirmed or the trial period may be extended.

As a strategy to prevent potential off rolling, a student will only be accepted onto ReEngagEd Ltd's roll when they present for their first day of education. Until this time, the referring school should continue to treat the students as single registered at their school and record attendance marks in their own register.

We will keep referring schools informed about attendance and where possible make them aware of the likelihood that a placement is going to be ended due to prolonged non-attendance. If a student's attendance falls below 50% ReEngagEd Ltd reserves the right to put an attendance plan in place. If the child and their family do not engage with this plan, the placement could be at risk due to non-engagement. ReEngagEd Ltd will work closely with the referring school to avoid this happening and to identify alternative strategies and solutions.


## 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 in school review meetings or, where there is a concern, by letter.

# Authorised and unauthorised absence

## 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 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher 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 (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

**1.2 Sanctions**

Our school will work with the student's referring school to make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis and the referring school will usually be the organisation to lead this process as a short term placement could end before the process is complete.

**Penalty notices**

ReEngagEd will not issue penalty notices to parents of students who fail below attendance expectations. However, ReEngagEd Ltd will supply attendance data and any other attendance information a commissioning school may reasonably request regarding a student's attendance. Commissioning school may then use this data to issue fixed penalty notices.

# Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will use a variety of methods for promoting good attendance. From time to time, rewards will be issued for good or improving attendance but decisions about when this is relevant and the nature of reward will be made on a case by case basis.

# Supporting students who are absent or returning to school

## Students absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We will support students with complex barriers to attendance by creating an individual attendance plan which will explore the reasons behind their attendance and be used to identify strategies to address these. We will work with families, external agencies and the referring school to identify relevant strategies and implement these.

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

We will take measures to support students absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their SEND. We will work with families to agree reasonable adjustments and provide additional support according to the individual student's needs and circumstances.

Where a student has an education health and care plan (EHCP) 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.

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

If students return to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence the school may decide to draw up an individual support plan to assist in this process. In exceptional circumstances the school may consider a part-time timetable or phased return but this will be time limited to ensure that the student returns to a full education as quickly as possible. If a phased return or part-time timetable is implemented this will be formalised in writing and additional work will be provided for the student to complete at home.

# Attendance monitoring

Our attendance data is collected on our attendance system, DCPro and analysed by Linda Guest regularly. This information is reported to the Management Committee termly.

## 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.

## 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

## 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 relevant parties to facilitate discussions with students and families, and to the management committee and school leaders in the referring school (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and student premium leads)

- 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

## 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

Unauthorised absence will be addressed using a range of strategies including meetings, letters, and closer monitoring. Students will poor attendance will have an individual attendance plan drawn up.

## Monitoring arrangements

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

## 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<br><br>•    Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or<br><br>•    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 |