RAISE EDUCATION AND WELLBEING SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Version 6
August 2025

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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 pupils

> Promoting good attendance and the benefits of 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

> Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils 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 (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)](#)

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

> [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/made](#)It also refers to:

> [School census guidance](#)

> [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

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

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- 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 pupils, where appropriate
  - Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

  Holding the Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Head of School
The Head of School is responsible for:
- The implementation of this policy at the school
  - 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 DfE and local authority
    - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
  - Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
  - Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
  - Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance

- 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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Communicating 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

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

> Sharing information from the school register with the local authority

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance
The designated senior leader is responsible for:
> Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school

> Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance

> Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

> Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis

> Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

> Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff

> Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed

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

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

> Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

3.4 The attendance officer
The school attendance officer is responsible for:
> Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 8)

> 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

> Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

The attendance officer is Chloe Spencer and can be contacted via chloe.spencer@raise-school.co.uk

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors
Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office

3.6 School Admin staff
School admin staff will:
Take calls from parents/carers about absences on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

3.7 Parents/carers
Parents/carers are expected to:
Make sure their child attends every day/timetabled session on time
Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the 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

4. Recording attendance

4.1 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

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 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 9:00am and ends at 3:00pm.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00am and will be kept open until 10:00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.45pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am, or as soon as practically possible.

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.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil'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 pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:
> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

> After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality by:

- Emphasising the importance of punctuality to limit lost learning opportunities
- Raising awareness of punctuality issues among all staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Ensuring that parents/carers understand their responsibility in relation to making sure their child attends regularly and punctually
- Equipping pupils with the life skills needed to take responsibility for punctuality
- Effectively communicate with parents/carers regarding punctuality
- Support pupils with any difficulties they may be experiencing
- Support parents/carers with any difficulties they may be having
- Use data to continually monitor, report and intervene in cases of persistent lateness

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

> Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the attendance officer will conduct 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 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent

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

> Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken, including informing the DSL, where necessary

4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents/carers will receive their child's attendance record via termly written report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 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. 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 Head of School's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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 weeksbefore the absence, and in accordance with any leave of 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 (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 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 to 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 offsite 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

5.2 Penalty notices

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The school will always make every effort to work collaboratively with pupils and parents/carers to improve attendance. Fines, or penalty notice, that require each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or

£120 within 28 days to the local authority. The school will only consider this approach as a last resort, taking the whole context into account.

Penalty notices can be issued by the Head of School, local authority officer or the police. The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- The context of the unauthorised absences

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school has a culture of high expectations in relation to pupil attendance. Regular messages are conveyed to pupils about the importance of their education. The Behaviour Policy outlines rewards that can be earned whilst in school, to motivate pupils to attend.

The school understands that some pupils may have medical or social needs that negatively affects their attendance. We work with agencies to understand the pupils support needs to help them to access Where this occurs, we work with parents/carers and professionals to develop strategies and reasonable adjustments to enable them to access the curriculum.

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to full-time education. However, we acknowledge that in very exceptional circumstances, and where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. These are likely to fall in to one of three categories.

1. Where a medical condition or family bereavement prevents a pupil from attending full-time education

2. Where there are behavioural difficulties, and the school is seeking an alternative to permanent exclusion,

3. Where a pupil joining the school has significant needs and a reduced timetable would help them get used to the school and its routines

In all cases this is discussed with parents/carers and the placing local authority. These arrangements are regularly reviewed.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

The school will provide support by the attendance officer, YP champion, form teachers

- Blended Learning & Integration Plans (BLIPs):
- YP on BLIP may start later or attend alternative sites
- Intervention Assessment & Action Plan

Medical/Mental health Absence:

- Use a triangulated approach: documented involvement with services (e.g. CAMHS), parental input, and school perspective.
- A letter is sent to the family outlining the situation and school's support plan.
- Ongoing support from Attendance officer, YP Champion and Pastoral team.

8. Attendance monitoring

- Attendance Tracker Slip:
- Records reason for absence, actions taken, and safeguarding notes.
- Completed for every unexplained absence or concern.
    - Intervention Assessment & Action Plan:
- Tracks interventions for low attendance or complex needs.
- Includes statutory actions, professional involvement, and parent communications.
    - Home Visits by Attendance officer
    - Letter to support parents/carers
- Low attendance alerts
- Mental health-related absence documentation
- Support offered
- Letters of concern
- Letters to be issued every 4 weeks

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 pupil, year group and cohort level.
Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

8.2 Analysing attendance
The school will:
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- 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 pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

Provide targeted support to the pupils 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 form tutors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, 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

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's 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 pupils 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 pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.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)	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	Pupil 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	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