

**Pinehurst Primary School**

**Attendance Policy 2024**

**‘Experience, Excel and Enjoy’**

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# 1. Aims

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

* Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
* Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
* Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Pinehurst Primary School recognises the clear link between the attendance and achievement of pupils.

The aim of this policy, is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Pinehurst Primary School to support learning and development.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment. To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time.

Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%.

As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.

Pinehurst Primary School believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Pupils and all members of Pinehurst Primary School community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring pupils attend to achieve.

This Policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

*2. Legislation and guidance*

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

* [The Education Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/VI/chapter/II)
* [The Education Act 2002](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/part/3/chapter/3)
* [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/2/crossheading/school-attendance)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/amendment-regulation-2010_tcm3-8642.pdf)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1625/made)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/made)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016](http://legislation.data.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/made/data.html)
* [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/pdfs/uksiem_20130756_en.pdf)

This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the [school census](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2017-to-2018-guide-for-schools-and-las), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

# 3. School procedures

**3.1 Attendance register**

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

* Present
* Attending an approved off-site educational activity
* Absent
* Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

* The original entry
* The amended entry
* The reason for the amendment
* The date on which the amendment was made
* The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

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

Pupils must arrive in school by 9.05 am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.45pm (ks1). 1.30pm (ks2).

Any child who arrives between 8.50am and 9.05am (when the Late Gate closes) will be recorded as being late.

**3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – on the first day of illness by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents can inform the school of an absence by telephoning the school office on:

**0151 263 1300**

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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

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

**3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

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

For a dental or medical appointment please provide an appointment card or similar for the appointment to be authorised.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

**3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

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

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

Children with ongoing punctuality issues will be offered a parental meeting with school and the schools learning mentor, Assistant Headteacher (Mrs Steers) and/or EWO.

**3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

 First response texts are made each morning to contact parents of all absent children. If no response is received from the text a follow up call is made (First Direct Response). A second call is made later on in the morning for families who we have been unable to reach.

If contact is not made, an email will also be sent to the parent’s email address in order to gain a response.

A further call will be made during the afternoon, to see if a child who has been reported to feel unwell, will be returning to school the following day/after the weekend.

 If a pupil is persistently (or intermittently) absent, the school will write to the parents and invite them to attend a meeting at school.

 If a pupil is persistently absent, or late, and the schools efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the situation will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer during his/her consultation visit.

 Notes from parents will be kept on the pupil’s file (Link Docs). All telephone messages regarding absence/lateness are to be recorded in SIMs & CPOMS.

 For ‘no reason given’ absences letters will be sent requesting an explanation.

**3.6 Reporting to parents**

Your child’s attendance will be recorded via the end of year school report. Here you will be able to see your child’s attendance, number of lates and authrorised and unauthorised absences.

# 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

**4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define ‘exceptional circumstances’ as a family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event. Both examples would be acceptable for short absences.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher’s discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

* Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
* Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
* Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes– this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
* Term time holidays will not be authorised.

**4.2 Legal sanctions**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

A penalty notice maybe issued.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the Local Authority’s Code of Conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

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

For payment terms please see Liverpool Councils guidance.

# 5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Within school we support attendance with:

Class Dojos

Verbal recognition

Attendance certificates

100% attendance raffle

Class displays to promote good attendance.

Assemblies to promote attendance

Attendance badges

Local attendance awards

Attendance being a standard item on all staff meeting agendas

# 6. Attendance monitoring

Mrs Steers is the Attendance Lead at Pinehurst Primary.

The Attendance Team monitors pupil 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

On the first day of absence, school will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil’s absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer.

Persistent Absentees (PAs) are analysed on a weekly basis.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a Persistent Absentee.

The Attendance Team will hold an Attendance Review Panel which will be held every four weeks. Parents of children who are PA will be invited to review and discuss their child’s attendance

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

# 7. Roles and responsibilities

**7.1 The Governing Body**

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

**7.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

**7.3 The Attendance Team**

The Attendance Team:

* Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
* Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
* Works with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
* Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
* Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

**7.4 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

**7.5 Office/Reception staff**

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

# 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Governing Body.

# 9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

# Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s guidance on school attendance.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **SIMS Description** | **DfE Description / Explanation** |
| / | Present (AM) | Present for school morning session |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present for school afternoon session |
| B | Attending any other  Approved Education  Activity | Attending any other approved educational activity. Not to be used for Virtual learning |
| C | Other authorised circumstances | Leave absence for exceptional circumstance |
| C1 | Leave of absence – regulated performance | Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad. |
| C2 | Leave of absence – Temporary part-time timetable | Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable |
| D | Dual registered | Dual registered to another school |
| E | Suspended or excluded without alternative provision | Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision |
| G | Family holiday (not agreed) | Unauthorised absence as pupil on a family holiday, not agreed, or is taking days more than an agreed family holiday |
| I | Illness | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) |
| J1 | Leave of absence – Interview for employment or transfer to another educational institution | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution |
| K | Alternative provision provided by LA | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Late arrival before the register closed |
| M | Medical or dental appointment | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Reason absence not yet established |
| O | Absence in other or unknown circumstance | Absence in other or unknown circumstance |
| P | Participating in sports activity | Participating in sports activity |
| Q | Unable to attend – lack of access arrangements | Unable to attend the school because of lack of access arrangements |
| R | Religious observance | Religious observance |
| S | Study leave for public examination | Study leave for public examination |
| T | Traveling with parent for occupational purposes | Traveling with parent for occupational purposes |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Late (after registers closed) |
| V | Attending an educational  visit or trip | Attending an educational visit or trip |
| W | Attending work experience | Attending work experience |
| X | Not required to attendnon-compulsory school age pupil | Not required to attend-non-compulsory school age pupil |
| Y1 | Unable to attend –  Transport not available | Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being provided |
| Y2 | Unable to attend – widespread travel emergency | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel |
| Y3 | Unable to attend – unavoidable partial closure | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. |
| Y4 | Unable to attend – unavoidable full closure | Unable to attend due to the whole schools’ site being unexpectedly closed |
| Y5 | Unable to attend – criminal justice detention | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention |
| Y6 | Unable to attend – Public Health Guidance / Law | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law |
| Y7 | Unable to attend – Unavoidable other than  Y1-Y6 | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. |
| Z | Pupil not on roll | Prospective pupil not on admission requester |
| # | Planned whole school closure | Planned whole school closure |