



# Attendance and Lateness Policy

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Agreed by governing body: Autumn 2023

Review date: Summer 2024

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Headteacher:

## **Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility**

### **Introduction, aims, purpose of policy**

We expect all children on roll to attend every day on time, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school. Once a child is enrolled at school, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends every day, unless prevented from doing so by illness or other exceptional circumstances for which absence is authorised by the school. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 ( and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments), the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This register will also indicate whether an absence was 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

Our aims and objectives in relation to pupils' attendance are to:

- Build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Maximise attendance so that all pupils can gain full access to our curriculum and be enabled to reach their full academic potential and achieve a high level of personal and social well-being;
- Ensure children are on time and ready to start their lessons;
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absences, acting early to address patterns of absence;
- Eliminate unauthorised absence;
- Discourage families from arranging holidays during school terms;
- Ensure that parents and carers understand clearly when it is appropriate to keep their children off school and when this constitutes unauthorised absence;
- Ensure that school staff and parents are familiar with and adhere to our procedures for registering pupils' attendance, and reporting, recording and following up absence or lateness;
- Ensure that pupils and their parents and carers understand the importance of regular and consistent attendance as well as ensuring that their children come to school on time;
- Make clear to parents the consequences of failing to ensure that their children attend school;

### **Policy summary**

The first part of the policy describes the role of the parents and their statutory responsibilities. If a child is absent then parents should report this to the school giving the reasons. The school will decide whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Requests for leave of absence during term time are strongly discouraged and if the request is because of a holiday this will be always unauthorised. In the unavoidable case of long-term absence caused by, for example, illness, the school will do what it can to ensure the child's education does not suffer. Where a child is repeatedly late or absent then the Local Authority Education Welfare Service will become involved. The governing body recognises the importance of attendance and lateness; it sets targets for the school and monitors the data on a regular basis. 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

**Please also refer to the following policies and documents**

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Whole school vision statement
- Equality of Opportunity Policy
- Children with Health Needs that Cannot Attend School Policy

### **Legislation and Guidance:**

This policy meets the requirements of [working together to improve school attendance 2022](#) from the Department for Education (DFE) and refers to the DFE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \( Pupil Registration\) \( England\) Regulations 2006 \( and 2010,2011,2013,2016 amendments](#)

[The Education \( Penalty Notices\) \( England\) \( Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DFE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

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

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## **I Parental role and responsibilities**

- 1.1 Once a child is enrolled at school, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends every day, unless prevented from doing so by illness or other exceptional circumstances for which absence is authorised by the school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 ( and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments) , the governing body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. This register will also indicate whether an absence was ‘authorised’ or ‘unauthorised’.
- 1.3 Definition of ‘**authorised absence**’: an absence is classified as authorised when the school has ascertained that a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. Exceptional cases of religious observances or particular family circumstances may also result in an authorised absence being granted by the school. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, or allows a child to stay away from school to celebrate a family birthday or go on a family outing, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.
- 1.4 Definition of ‘**unauthorised absence**’: an absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

## **2 Procedure if a child is absent**

- 2.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, this will inform the school office staff, who will endeavour to contact a parent or carer on the first day of absence. If we can’t get hold of the parents, carers or guardians we may take one or more of the following steps;
- Email known all contacts with the request to contact the school regarding the child’s attendance
  - Verbally contact all Arbor contacts for the child in an attempt to contact the parents
  - Inform the EWS at the Local Authority
  - Conduct a home visit/door knock
  - Refer to the Single Point Access team
  - Contact a social worker, if the child/family has one
  - If worried about the welfare of a child we may contact the police

The school encourages parents to telephone the school to inform them of their child’s absence through illness, on the first morning of absence before 8.55am or as soon as practically possible . This provides reassurance of a child’s safety in the event that parents cannot be contacted by telephone, for any reason.

- 2.2 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as an appointment confirmation, prescription or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- 2.3 If a child has an unavoidable medical appointment, the parent/carer must inform the school prior to the day of absence, by calling or emailing the school. The pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time.
- 2.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

### **3 Requests for leave of absence for a child**

- 3.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible and do not miss out on crucial learning which may put them at an educational disadvantage. However, we do understand that there are exceptional circumstances in which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special religious (such exceptional circumstances would not include normal events such as birthdays or regular religious ceremonies). We expect parents and carers to contact the school to obtain authorisation at least a week in advance.
- 3.2 Parents and carers have no statutory right to withdraw their children from school for a family holiday. Children are required to attend school for 190 days in a school year, leaving 175 days of weekends and school holidays. Parents and carers should always endeavour to arrange family holidays when their children are not required to be in school.
- 3.3 Absences directly before or after school holidays may not be automatically authorised and you may be asked for medical or other evidence to support the absence.
- 3.4 Our school considers pupils' continuous attendance at school to be so essential for their academic achievement that it is not our policy to authorise holidays during term time. Children will be marked as having an unauthorised absence in all cases if they are absent because they are on holiday.

### **4 Long-term absence**

- 4.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send work home, so that, where possible, the child can keep in touch with the learning going on in their class.
- 4.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school in extreme circumstances may make arrangements for the child to be given regular work and support at home please refer to Children with Health Needs that Cannot Attend School Policy

### **5 Repeated unauthorised absences**

- 5.1 The school will contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or carers will be asked to

visit the school to discuss the reasons. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the Local Authority support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

- 5.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action, possibly resulting in a fixed penalty fine, against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.
- 5.3 Persistent Absence is defined by the DfE as where a pupil misses 10% or more and severe absences is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Particular attention is given to those pupils where absence is so low because of the impact this will have on them academically, socially and emotionally. The school will liaise with the Education Welfare Service for advice in such circumstances and typically one of their officers will contact families to support them to help ensure that attendance is improved.

## **6 Lateness**

**Children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 & 2 line up ready to go into class at 8.45am. Children in Year 3,4,5 and 6 start at 8.55am but can arrive from 8:45am.**

- 6.1 It is important that children arrive at school in good time so they make a settled start to the day and are ready to learn. Parents have an important responsibility to ensure that they help their children develop good habits and arrive at the school ready to line-up with their class.
- 6.2 All children that are late must go to the main entrance and be registered as late. Younger children will then be taken to their class. Parents should not take their children into class or go by any alternative route around the site for reasons of security.
- 6.3 The school will keep accurate records of those children that are late. Where there is a pattern of lateness, parents will be informed and if there is little or no improvement, invited to meet with the attendance team or senior member of staff. If no improvements are made then this is referred to the Local Authority (LA) Education Welfare Service. The LA can issue fines based on persistent lateness.

## **7 Attendance targets**

- 7.1 The school sets a target of 96% attendance. This is agreed by the senior staff and governors as part of our annual target-setting process. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

## **8 Monitoring and review**

8.1 We will monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level. We will identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

8.2 We will analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these

pupils and their families. We will look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance we will provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families. We will use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

### 8.3 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. We will use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence and will hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent. These meetings will be to discuss attendance and engagement at school. We will provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

## 9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The Governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- At every policy review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

9.2 The headteacher and designated lead for attendance is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where appropriate
- Meet with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues, delivering targeted interventions and support to pupils and families
- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers



- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum after 4 Years by the headteacher
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Bishop and can be contacted via [info@chasebridge.richmond.sch.uk](mailto:info@chasebridge.richmond.sch.uk)

### 9.3 The attendance officer

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports and reporting concerns about attendance to the senior leadership team and the headteacher
- Working with the education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

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

### 9.5 School administration staff will

- Take calls from parents/carers about absences on a day-to-day basis and record it on Arbor
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

### 9.6 Parents, guardians and carers

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.55am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

## Appendices

### ATTENDANCE CODES

Codes used in official registers and shared with parents in end of year reports

# = partial or whole school closure  
(attendance not required)

# = not yet marked

/ = present

B = educated off site

C = authorised exceptional circumstance

D = dual registration (attend elsewhere)

E = excluded (no alternative provision)

F = extended family holiday (agreed)

G = family holiday (NOT agreed)

H = family holiday (AGREED)

I = illness (not medical or dental)

J = interview

L = before registration closed

M = medical/dental appointment (authorised)

N = no reason yet provided for absence

O = unauthorised absence

P = approved sporting activity

R = religious observance (authorised)

S = study leave

T = traveller absence

U = late after register closed

V = educational visit or trip

W = work experience

X = non-compulsory school age

Y = unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Z = pupil not on roll

## Attendance and lateness – key information for parents - Did You Know ... ?

- Each year there are only 190 school days, this means that there are 175 days for shopping, birthday treats, non-urgent medical appointments, dental appointments and holidays etc
- If a child misses 16 days of school in a year then they are out of school more than they are in school!
- If a child misses a day a week for their entire school life it is the equivalent of missing 2 years of school.

Impact of Poor Attendance:

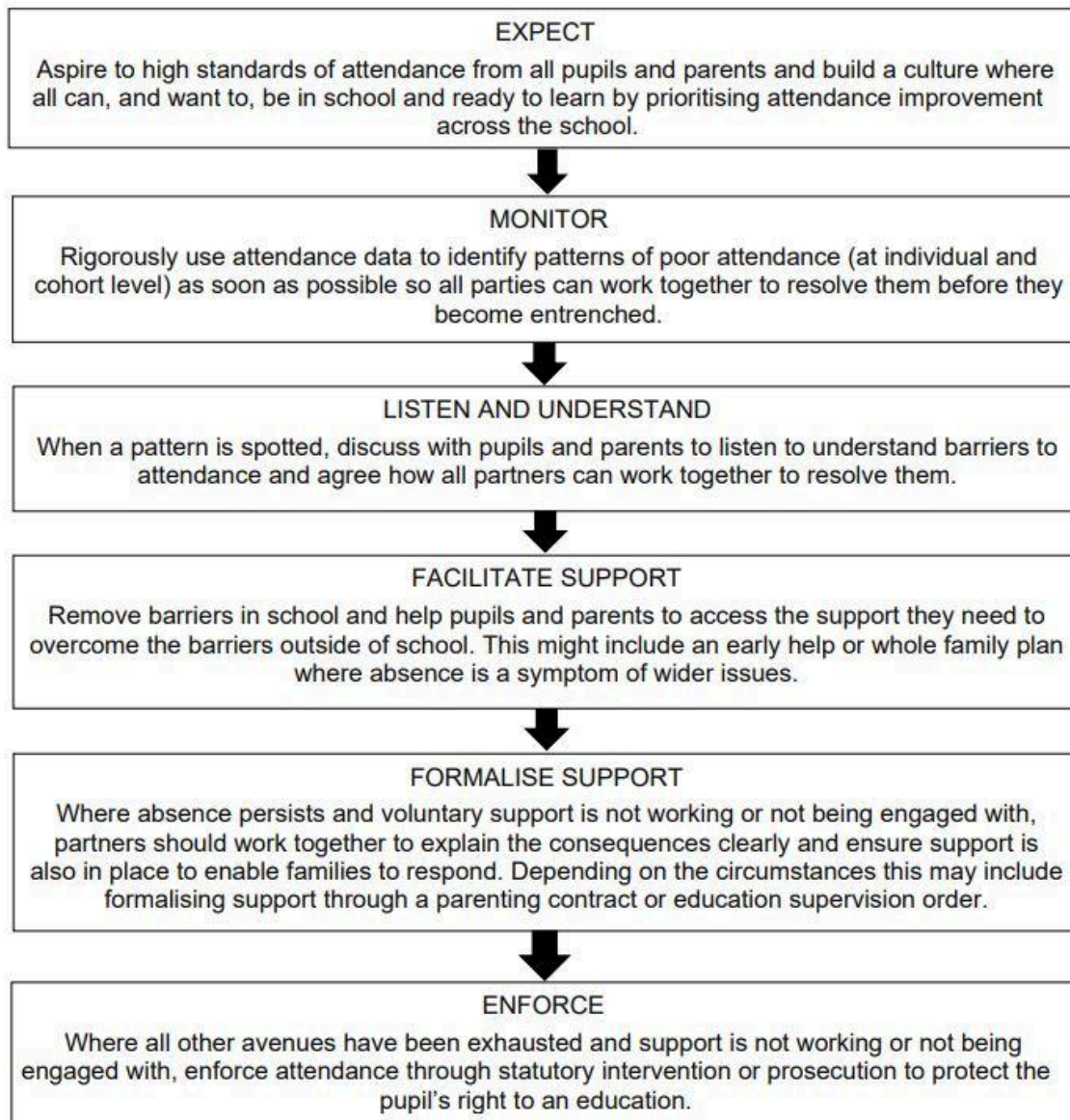
% Attendance	= % absence	= Days missed	= approx GCSE grades dropped	= weeks missed	= Years missed (over 5 years of education)
100%	0%	0	0	0	0
90%	10%	19	1	4	0.5
80%	20%	38	1-2	8	1
70%	30%	57	2-3	12	1.5
60%	40%	76	3-4	15	2
50%	50%	95	4-5	19	2.5

### Late Arrivals

- 5 minutes late = 3 days lost each year
- 10 minutes late = 6.5 days lost each year
- 15 minutes late = 10 days lost each year
- 20 minutes late = 13 days lost each year
- 30 minutes late = 19 days lost each year

## Working together to improve attendance

13. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



Please see our full policy on the school website for more detailed information:

[www.chasebridge.richmond.sch.uk/](http://www.chasebridge.richmond.sch.uk/)