

Saltaire Primary School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2022-2023

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Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Children need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Saltaire Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of children who are registered at our school on our school website.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure 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 meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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](#)

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:

- 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 data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- 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
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- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Kate Jacklin and can be contacted via 01274 584093 or katejacklin@saltaireps.co.uk.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is Siobhan Winter and can be contacted via 01274 584093

3.5 Class Teachers

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

3.6 School Admin Team

The School Admin Team will:

Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system. They also follow up any unknown reasons for absence each day by calling parents and contacts.

Transfer calls from parents to the attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:15am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Children

Children are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an 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 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 if 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The doors will open each day at 8:50am for children to enter the building. Children must arrive in school by 9:00am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9:00am and will be kept open until 9:05. In Reception, the register will be taken at 9:10am and will be kept open until 9:15am. Children in all year groups will be marked as late (using the code L) until 9:20am. The register for the second session will be taken at:

- 12:45pm in Reception and Year 1 (closing at 12:50pm);
- 1:00pm in Years 2, 3 and 4 (closing at 1:05pm);
- 1:15pm in Year 5 and Year 6 (closing at 1:20pm)

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9:15am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents can inform school of an unplanned absence by:

- Calling the school and leaving a message on the answerphone
- Calling the school and informing a member of staff

- Informing a teacher who will then inform the school office
- Sending an email to absence@saltaireps.co.uk

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.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment using the processes described in section 4.2.

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.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A 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 will monitor children's lateness and if an ongoing pattern causes concern, we will write to parents and carers to raise this. We may choose to invite parents and carers for a meeting to discuss this.

4.5 Following up absence

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

- Call the child's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts, a follow-up email will be sent and the Headteacher will be informed

- If we have not been able to establish contact by 12:00pm, a home visit may be conducted, if practical to do so - we may not be able to travel to the home address if the family live outside of the local area
- If we have not been able to make contact by the end of the school day, the school may report its concerns to the police using the 101 service
- 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
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents

We report children's attendance information to parents and carers on the termly reports to parents. This information is also available on the Arbor app.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

In exceptional circumstances there are times when a parent may legitimately request a leave of absence which might include the following:

- A parent is seriously/terminally ill and the holiday proposed is likely to be the last such holiday
- There has recently been a death or other significant trauma in the family and it is felt that an immediate holiday might help the child concerned better deal with the situation
- The holiday is a unique one off never to be repeated occasion which can only take place at the time requested.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Parents do not have any right or entitlement to expect term time leave to be granted.

Leave for the purpose of a family holiday will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If leave is taken without authorisation, it will be recorded in the school attendance register as unauthorised holiday absence.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form,

accessible [via the school website](#). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental 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 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
- Family weddings - Leave for the purpose of a family wedding will only be granted for the wedding of an immediate family member (parent or sibling) as follows:

The school will only grant up to two days absence for family weddings - any additional absence (for example, when travelling abroad for the wedding) will be classed as term-time holiday and will not be authorised.

5.2 Legal sanctions

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.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not 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

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

5.3

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

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

Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/crew leaders, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 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. The school follows the [Bradford Staged Intervention approach to School Attendance](#)

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Contact the parents to discuss the reasons for absence if a pupil's absence goes above 4 days

- If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The Attendance Officer, Designated Senior Leader for Attendance and Headteacher will regularly monitor (at least monthly) the attendance of all children and will identify those pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees. We will work closely with parents and carers to reduce persistent absence, as follows:

Stage 1: Needs met by Universal Services available to all

Criteria: Attendance Level is between 90% and 100% over a 12-week period

Primary Responsibility: Schools - Advisory Model

- **School Letter 1:** Letter sent to parents of children whose attendance drops below the school attendance target of 95% over a twelve week period - sent by Designated Senior Leader
- **School Letter 2:** Sent after two weeks if no improvement and no satisfactory explanation have been received to explain the absences
- **School Letter 3:** No improvement - arrange meeting with parents and send school letter 3

Stage 2: Universal Plus: additional support which may or may not require multi-agency work with other professionals.

Criteria: Attendance Level is below 90% over a 12-week period

Primary Responsibility: Schools - Mandatory Process

Children with attendance below 90% will require additional support to return them to over 90%. The support will take the shape of either welfare support or via the initial stages of enforcement action. This level of intervention is the primary responsibility of the school, which may employ the Local Authority's Traded Attendance Service or another external service to provide this in conjunction with the school.

Stage 3: Targeted Support/Partnership Plus – Help and support from a range of professionals for families with complex needs.

Criteria: Attendance Level is below 80%, with 24 sessions + of unauthorised absence in a 12-week period AND Stage 2 has been completed

Primary Responsibility: Bradford Council (following request from school)

When all attempts to engage with the family at intervention stages 1 and 2 have failed, and the criteria has been met, the school can refer to Bradford Council to undertake a Stage 3 Intervention, which initiates a criminal investigation in line with the Criminal Investigation Process.

Further detailed information about all three stages can be found [here](#).

8. Monitoring arrangements

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

9. Links with other policies

This policy is 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

Code	Definition	Scenario
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day