

Attendance Policy

Date written

May 2024

Authorised by

Governing Board

Review Date

Summer 2026





Contents

1 Aims	3
2 Legislation and guidance.....	4
3 Roles and responsibilities	4
4 Recording attendance.....	5
5 Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6 Attendance monitoring.....	8
7 Children missing from education (CME)	9
8 Deletions from roll	9
9 Sharing the attendance policy with parents	9
10 Monitoring arrangements.....	10
Appendix 1: Attendance codes	11
Appendix 2 Child Missing from Education (CME) guidance from the Local Authority.....	13



1 Aims

As a school we are committed to ensuring that our children receive a rich and engaging curriculum. This helps them develop a love for learning and prepares them for their future. To make the most of our curriculum, we know that children must have good attendance and must attend school on time.

We demonstrate that we value good attendance by:

- Promoting 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 ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

By ensuring that attendance is good we ensure that our pupils can realise their potential inline with our school values.



Our children are confident learners, they work hard to succeed with every challenge.



Our children show respect for themselves and other people in our community, our country and our world.



Our children love learning and are keen to learn in our school, at home and in the future.



Our children have strong core skills in communication (reading, writing, speaking and computing), mathematics and have a good understanding of topics across the whole curriculum.



Our children are confident to share their views, listen to other people's ideas and opinions and make decisions that help everyone achieve.

And links to the following articles from the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child.



Article 28 Children have a right to a good quality education;

Article 29 Education should develop children's talents;



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 fulfill expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data including monitoring attendance statistics

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

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
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- 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
- Working with the educational advisory service to tackle persistent absence



3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis using Pupil Asset.

3.5 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Share messages about attendance with relevant heads of year, class teachers and other senior leaders.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Contact the school to report their child's absence before 9:00 a.m. on the first day of absence advise when their child is 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

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4 Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

The school keeps an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

Our attendance register is taken twice in the day - at the beginning of the morning session and the beginning of the afternoon session. It records 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 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 keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

4.2 Unplanned absence

It is the responsibility of all parents to notify the school on the first day of a period of absence. This is to ensure that our children are kept safe and the school knows the reason for their absence. Parents can leave messages on the school answer machine.

If a child is absent from school then the following actions are taken:

If a message is not received from a parent

A text message will be sent to parents of any absent pupils who have not notified the school on the morning of their first day of absence. This will ask parents to phone the school.

If a phone call is not received

The attendance officer will phone parents.

If, after 3 days, there has been no contact from parents.

The school will endeavor to complete a home visit.

If at any point concerns are raised about the safety of a child the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed.

The office staff keep a log of texts and calls. Any concerns regarding safeguarding will follow the school's safeguarding procedures (See safeguarding policy). 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/carers 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.

However, we encourage parents/carers 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. Section 5 explains the 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



4.5 Reporting to parents/carers

The school regularly informs parents/carers about their child's attendance. This is at least once a term. Attendance and punctuality concerns and successes are also shared at termly parent evenings and via the end of term report. Parents of pupils who have low attendance (lower than 90%) are contacted by the attendance officer and offered suggestions to help them improve their child's attendance.

5 Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil 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.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. The school also considers the pupils attendance over the last two years.

The school will not approve absence for term-time holidays.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 10 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, parents should ask the school office for access to the online form. 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/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' 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

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers 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/carers 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 the 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.

6 Attendance monitoring

6.1 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.

6.2 Analysing attendance

Attendance for every pupil is regularly analysed, this is at least once per half term.

Following an attendance analysis, actions from the following list are taken. This list escalates if attendance continues to be low.

- A letter warning parents that attendance is low.
- A second letter telling parents that medical evidence is now required to authorise absences.
- A third letter which sets a meeting with a senior leader.
- Pre-referral meeting with Attendance Advisory Service
- Formal action with the Attendance Advisory Service.

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers 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

6.4 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 will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- 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, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance



7 Children missing from education (CME)

If a pupil is missing from school for ten consecutive school days and the school has no information about the child then Child Missing from Education (CME) procedures will be followed. These are set by the LA and are designed to ensure that all children are kept safe and that their education continues.

8 Deletions from roll

If pupils leave our school they remain on our register until we are contacted by their new school. At this point their leaving date is set to the day before they start their new school. If a child leaves and there is no contact from a new school for four weeks then s/he is removed and CME procedures are followed (see above). [Note the CME procedure would be started after two weeks]

The school attendance officer notifies the LA of all removals from our school roll.

9 Sharing the attendance policy with parents

Parents receive the attendance policy as part of their welcome pack when they join our school. In addition, parents are given a letter with the following text:

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

We promote high attendance and excellent punctuality for all our pupils and we need the help of our families to make this happen. Our staff are committed to providing teaching of a high quality but this can only have an impact if our pupils have regular attendance and are on time every day.

Our attendance team closely monitors the attendance of all pupils. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% then parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss how the school can support higher attendance. If attendance does not improve then other options will be explored which may involve the local authority's legal team.

How can parents help?

The points below will help ensure your child's attendance is as high as it possibly can be:

- If your child feels unwell in the morning do not make a decision until the last moment.
- If your child starts to feel better during the day then bring them to school.
- Appointments for dentist or doctor should ideally be outside of school time. If this is not possible then appointments near the start or end of the school day are good as pupils will get the majority of the school day.

A child must not remain at home for the following reasons:

- Parent is sick
- Sibling is sick
- Birthday treats
- Avoidable appointments e.g., haircuts

The school will not authorise holidays. Leaves of absence are only given in exceptional circumstances. These should be applied for via the school office and applications must be made in plenty of time before the proposed absence.



What if my child is sick?

If a child is physically sick then the Department for Health guidelines state that they should be kept off school for 24 hours to recover. If a child feels sick then monitor them closely and bring them to school if they feel better. If you are unsure then please phone the school office for advice.

Please note: parents must contact the school office on the first day of a child's absence.

10 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 2 years by the Head of School. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.



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
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
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

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024 .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf)

Appendix 2 Child Missing from Education (CME) guidance from the Local Authority

(See next page).

CME Guidance & Checklist for Schools

Timeline	NAME OF PUPIL..... Year Group CLASS	Date sent or done	Date reply/ no reply
From; DAY 1 Of Absence	<p>First Day of unexplained absence.....</p> <p>Normal School Attendance Action to be Undertaken: First day/daily calling is advised for any child who is absent without communication from parent.</p> <p>If the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, a LAC or a known vulnerable child, Children’s Social Care, must be informed at once or in line with agreed CP/LAC or CIN plans.</p> <p>A Child Missing Their Education is a Safeguarding Concern. If a child attends school erratically or ceases to attend school, for ‘whatever reason’, Schools are expected to undertake action to address this, following School Attendance Action and Safeguarding Procedures, as detailed in the Education Act 1996 and Subsequent Statutory Guidance (Documents Accessible via www.legislation.gov.uk); ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’. ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’. ‘Children Missing Education’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any danger factors and/or the possibility of the child(ren) being exposed to CSE/FGM/Radicalisation and Gang Relations should always to be considered. <p>Schools should undertake liaison with Children’s Social Care and or the Police as appropriate.</p>		
From; DAY 2	<p>The school should seek information from all available sources; For example; Emergency contacts previously supplied by the family, staff, other parents, pupils. Other schools where siblings are known to attend, who may be aware of the family’s circumstances as they may know, for example, that the family were intending to move or go on holiday. (Admissions can provide sibling information).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use all forms of communication as possible and ‘keep records’ (e-mails/telephone calls/letters). If applicable, use translation services. 		
From; DAY 3	<p>Where no communication has been received and/or no information has been obtained:</p> <p>Home visit to be undertaken by school staff to ascertain ‘child is safe’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If no response, a letter should be hand delivered, requesting contact and advising that if necessary, liaison with Children’s Social Care and the Police will be initiated. If schools are aware of any siblings at other schools, ring siblings schools to check for updated contact phone numbers and to see if they have any additional information. 		
Between Day 3 & 10	<p>School to continue with their actions and enquiries adhering to School Action/CME and Safeguarding Procedures, to try and establish the whereabouts and safety of the child (ren) School’s to contact known involved agencies, seeking information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School’s to contact Children’s Social Care (MASH Team) advising of concern and requesting any known information. SEN, School Nurse, Health visitors, GP, Internal/external partner agencies & Housing etc.... 		
DAY 11	<p>If there is no response to letters/email/phone messages and home visits - The school must liaise with their AAO (where applicable) or the CME Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint reasonable enquiries should be undertaken <p>School must send a letter to last known address advising of the possible removal from roll of the pupil, following ‘twentieth’ day of unauthorised absence. (Advising the parent/carer of that date).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School to request parent/carer makes contact with the school. <p>Where appropriate seek advice & assistance from the Greenwich Child Missing Education Officer.</p>		
Between day 11 & 20	<p>School to continue with their actions and enquiries adhering to School Action/CME and Safeguarding Procedures, to try and establish the whereabouts and safety of the child (ren).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School to Continue to undertake school action to address absence. School to discuss with their AAO (where applicable) whether a referral to the AAS would be appropriate, ie... In the case of ‘Extended Leave of Absence’ AAO/CME Officer to support school in undertaking ‘Joint Reasonable Enquiries’. 		
Between day 15-& 20	<p>If no communication received from parent/carer and/or child(ren) has not returned;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School to communicate (via Telephone/Email) with the CME Officer advising that the school intend to remove the pupil from roll on the identified date, should the pupil not return before-hand, seeking any additional advise/support. 		

DAY 21	Whereabouts still unknown/child has not returned: Pupil(s) can lawfully be deleted from the Schools Admission Register as at the end of the 20th day as long as the ‘Grounds for Deletion’ under Regulation 8 of the Education Regulations 2006 as amended (Education Act 1996), have been met’. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head teacher/Proprietor of the Educational Establishment with responsibility for the contents of the Admissions Register, authorises the decision to remove the child(ren) from roll. • School to send a letter to the last known address informing parent/carer that pupil is now off roll and referred to the Greenwich CMEO as a ‘Child Missing Education’. • School to inform parent/carer that Children’s Social Care and the Police will be notified. • School to advise parent/carer of school place re-application process, should the family return to area (UK). 		
DAY 21	Referral to be sent to the CMEO via e-mail cc’d to schools AAO (if appropriate) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children-missing-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk ❖ Schools are to attach a copy of this checklist, all correspondence/communications and an attendance certificate for the current and previous academic years, to the referral. 		
Upon Receipt Of the CME Referral	School (copy to Schools AAO) receive confirmation from the CMEO that the referral has been accepted and that the pupil(s) will be placed on the CME database. Please Note; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ If the CME procedure has not been followed appropriately and in accordance with legislation/regulations and statutory guidance, the referral will be returned to the school, with the requirement that the pupil’s name is reinstated on the school roll. 		
DAY 21 Onwards	School Administrator to undertake within 5 days : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal Greenwich On/Off roll webpage form to be completed • http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/schoolreportingform School Administrator to undertake within 15 days : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upload on to CTF & S2S websites, entering (appropriate code) into the destination field, ‘Lost Pupils’ Database, so any new school will be able to make contact. 		

Exceptions to making a ‘Greenwich’ CME Referral

Pupil advised to have moved to another Local Authority in England

- If you are made aware that a child is moving to another Local Authority, will not be returning to your school and you have the new address and/or school, please complete schools pupil files/database with all relevant information and advise the appropriate receiving Local Authority.
 - Schools AAO or the CME Officer can assist with contact details of the appropriate LA.
 - Once you have confirmation that information has been put on to their database, you may remove the child from roll and complete the Royal Borough of Greenwich ‘On/Off roll – School Reporting’ web form.
 - Upload the pupil details, normally via School2School/CTF.
- If the pupil moves to a new address in another Local Authority, without an identified school and the distance to travel is deemed too far, then the parent should be advised to contact the Admissions Department of the new authority to establish a school place.
 - The above actions would still be followed
 - A CME referral is completed and sent to the new Local Authority.

Pupil believed/advised to moving abroad;

- If you are aware of a child who is relocating abroad, you need to obtain a forwarding address, name of the school and any proof you can get regarding the relocation ie... proof of flight/ferry details.
 - Once this information has been obtained, the school are required to e-mail/contact the school named, for confirmation that the pupil(s) are on roll/to be offered a school place.
 - Proof of the pupil/family relocating abroad, is required before they can be removed from roll.
 - As long as whereabouts established, follow action for removal from roll, as above.
- **‘Gone abroad’** is not enough to warrant off rolling without checks being made beforehand.
- If information/proof regarding the whereabouts of the family having moved abroad, is not provided/made available, please follow the CME guidelines.

If Pupil Located Following a CME Referral

- If the school subsequently receives information as to the whereabouts of a pupil, previously referred as a CME, they are requested to contact the CME Officer immediately, advising them accordingly, so that investigations can cease and records amended.