



ATTENDANCE POLICY

An Exceptional Education for All

REACH for your future

Respect Enterprise Ambition Confidence Happiness

Autumn 2026

1. Aims

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

- Promoting good attendance and punctuality;
- 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; and
- Building strong, collaborative relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (updated 2026) [Working together to improve school attendance 2026](#) , and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These documents are drawn from statutory legal powers and duties governing school attendance, including:

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.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

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 statutory obligations under the national attendance framework.
- Regularly reviewing, analysing, and challenging attendance data.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and specific vulnerable cohorts.
- Making sure staff receive adequate professional training on attendance management.
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Designating the safeguarding link governor to also oversee school attendance.

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- The operational implementation of this policy across the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and regularly reporting figures to the governing board.
- Supporting all teaching and non-teaching staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Evaluating the impact of implemented attendance interventions and strategies.

The Attendance Team (Attendance Champions)

The attendance team comprises the School Office Manager, the Attendance Officer, and the Pastoral / Designated Safeguarding / Senior Mental Health Leader, supported by Education Welfare consultants. The team works closely together to improve and monitor attendance and punctuality. Each person has clearly defined roles and is clear about their responsibility.

The Designated Senior Leads responsible for attendance (Attendance Champions) Penny and Corinne can be contacted via penny@williamtyndale.islington.sch.uk. They are responsible for:

- Leading a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement and evaluating internal processes.
- Overseeing robust data analysis to identify patterns, trends, and cohorts requiring targeted support.
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devising specific, tailored interventions to remove out-of-school barriers before resorting to statutory action.
- Arranging supportive calls and face-to-face meetings with parents and carers.
- Working collaboratively with local authority attendance teams and Education Welfare consultants.
- Fulfilling the legal requirement to share individual pupil attendance data with the DfE.
- reporting absences to the local authority, which may incur fixed-penalty notices when appropriate; and
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Senior Leadership team.

The Attendance Officer

The School Attendance Officer is Natalie Goulet (or another member of the office staff in her absence), responsible for:

- Ensuring teaching staff complete and submit registers accurately and promptly.
- Entering correct statutory attendance codes and recording all authorised/unauthorised reasons.
- Recording lates accurately on the register.
- Attending multi-agency attendance meetings with senior leaders and Education Welfare consultants.
- Conducting first-day calling for any child absent without prior notification.

School office staff

School office staff will:

- take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system; and
- transfer calls from parents to the Pastoral Lead (if appropriate) in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance accurately twice a day. Registers must be submitted promptly by 9:00 am for the morning session and immediately following the lunch break for the afternoon session.

Parents and Carers

In line with statutory guidance, parents and carers are expected to work jointly and collaboratively with the school to remove attendance barriers. They must:

- Ensure their child attends school every single day on time.
- Call the school office to report an unplanned absence on the first morning of absence, providing a clear reason and expected return date.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Ensure that, where possible, medical and dental appointments are scheduled outside of school hours.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day and be in their classroom ready to learn by 8:55 am.

4. Recording Attendance

Attendance Register

The school keeps a statutory attendance register and places all pupils on it. Registers are taken at the start of the morning session (8:55 am, remaining open until 9:30 am) and once during the afternoon session (after lunch play). Registers record whether a pupil is:

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

All entries are kept for a minimum of 3 years.

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; and
- the nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Unplanned Absence and Illness

Parents must notify the school office on the first morning of an unplanned absence as soon as possible.

1. Illness is marked as authorised unless there is a genuine concern regarding authenticity. If in doubt, the school may request reasonable medical evidence (e.g., prescription, appointment card). We will not request medical evidence unnecessarily. If unsatisfied with the authenticity, the absence is recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified.

Planned Absence and Punctuality

Medical or dental appointments are authorised if notified in advance, though parents are encouraged to book these outside school hours.

Pupils arriving after 9:00 am are marked as late (Code L). Pupils arriving after the register closes at 9:30 am are marked as an unauthorised late absence (Code U), which counts as a full unauthorised session towards legal thresholds.

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/carer 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 school may contact the school's Educational Welfare consultant to carry out 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; and call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If the absence continues, the school will consider involving the Education Welfare consultant

Reporting to parents and carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via the end of year report. Parents will also be written to, if their child's attendance falls below 90%, to inform them that their child is considered a persistent absentee.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for Term-Time Leave

The Head Teacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Saving money on travel or holidays does not qualify as an exceptional circumstance. Leave is granted at the Head Teacher's absolute discretion regarding both approval and duration. Requests must be submitted via the school office form at least 4 weeks in advance, accompanied by supporting evidence. The Head Teacher will meet with parents prior to making a decision about an absence request.

Where term time leave is not approved and it is still taken, the school will usually request a penalty notice to be issued by the Council.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Any authorised absence should be kept to a minimum.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the planned absence and in accordance with any leave of absence request form; forms are accessible from the school office or can be emailed to the parent for completion. The Head Teacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- illness and medical/dental appointments (see Planned Absence above);

- 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; and
- 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.

The National Framework for Penalty Notices

Where support-first approaches are exhausted, unsuccessful, or inappropriate (such as an unauthorised holiday), the school may request the Local Authority to issue legal sanctions. Under the DfE National Framework, a penalty notice must be considered if a child accumulates 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period. These sessions do not need to be consecutive and can span multiple terms or school years.

Fines are issued per parent, per child. The escalation framework operates as follows:

- **First Offence:** The fine is £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between day 22 and day 28.
- **Second Offence (within a rolling 3-year period):** The fine is a flat rate of £160, payable within 28 days, with no option for a reduced early payment rate.
- **Third Offence (within a rolling 3-year period):** A third penalty notice cannot legally be issued. The case escalates directly to the Magistrates' Court, where prosecution can result in a fine of up to £2,500, a criminal record, or other formal community/parenting orders.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

To foster a positive whole-school culture around attendance, the school utilizes the following rewards:

- **Punctuality Certificates:** Awarded to classes with zero lates in a week during the whole-school assembly.
- **Attendance Badges:** Awarded termly to children with 100% attendance (neither absent nor late).
- **Punctuality Badges:** Awarded termly to children who achieve zero lates on the days they attend.
- **Annual Medals:** Awarded to pupils maintaining perfect attendance and punctuality for the entire academic year.

- Monthly Draws: Children with zero lates for the month enter a randomised electronic draw for a class prize.

7. Attendance Monitoring and Interventions

The attendance team utilises a structured 'support-first' pathway to monitor data and target intervention before pursuing statutory legal action:

Data and Monitoring Processes

- Regular Review Meetings: Held at least half-termly with our Education Welfare consultants to analyse data and target specific cohorts (e.g., Pupil Premium, EHCP, vulnerable groups).
- Persistent Absence Threshold (90%): A pupil is classified as a Persistent Absentee (PA) if they miss 10% or more of school sessions (attendance falls to or below 90%). When a child's attendance falls below 90%, an initial warning letter is sent to parents.
- Severe Absence Threshold (50%): A pupil is classified as a Severe Absentee if they miss 50% or more of school sessions. Intensive multi-agency plans and direct Local Authority support are deployed for these pupils.
- Escalation Plan: If attendance does not improve following the initial warning, parents are invited to an in-school attendance meeting with the Pastoral Lead and Education Welfare consultants to establish a supportive action plan (which may include referrals to school nursing or wider support agencies).
- Formal Legal Intervention: If support is unengaged with or unsuccessful, and the national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions in 10 weeks is met, a formal Notice to Improve is issued, giving a final window to demonstrate significant improvement before a penalty notice or court assessment is triggered.
- Holiday Border Patterns: Shared Google spreadsheets track running records of actions, and targeted communications are sent to families demonstrating patterns of absence immediately prior to or following school holidays.

Monitoring attendance

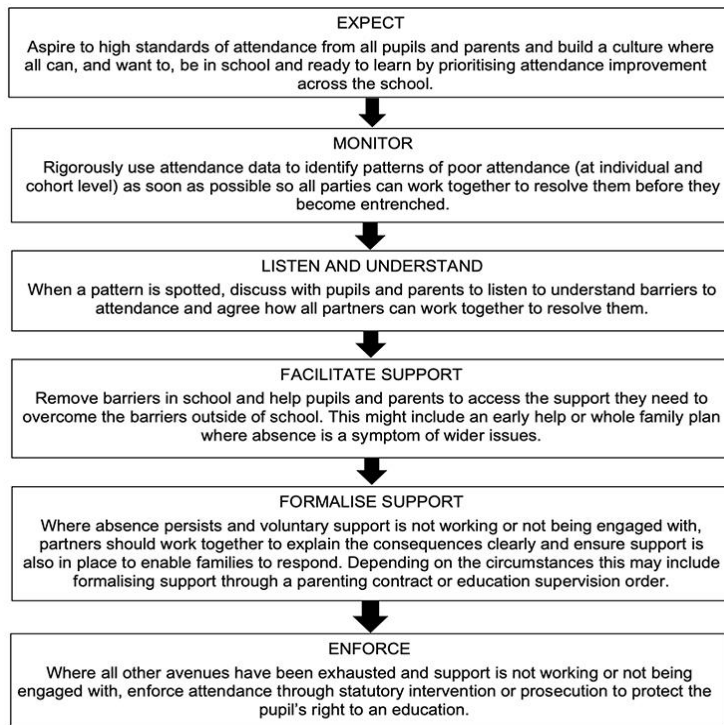
The school will:

- monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level; and
- 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.

8. 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. ***The aim is to support families and pupils to achieve good attendance through interventions, meetings, referrals to and working with wider support agencies before having to resort to statutory action;*** and look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence on a termly basis, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.



9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed continuously as statutory guidance from the Department for Education or the Local Authority is updated, and at a minimum annually, by Penny El-Nemer. At every review stage, the full governing board must formally approve the policy document.

10. Links with Other Policies

This attendance policy functions in close interaction with our wider school frameworks, including:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Strategy
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Medical Needs Policies