

Salendine Nook High School (Academy)

Attendance Policy (Non-Statutory)

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every student 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.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 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 Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

Attendance is monitored through the Personal Development, Behaviour and welfare sub-committee.

3.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors and/or the local authority and/or the school attendance officer as appropriate.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students.
- Liaising with the local authority in respect of fixed-penalty notices (including for leave of absences taken in term time) and pursuing legal action, where all other attempts to improve attendance have failed.

3.3 The Attendance Manager

The school Attendance Manager:

- Monitors attendance data (including Edulink) across the school and at an individual student level.

- Reports concerns about attendance to the Principal, Assistant Principal, APSO and Heads of Year.
- Works with the school Attendance and Pupil Support Officer (APSO) to tackle persistent absence.

3.4 The Attendance and Pupil Support Officer (APSO)

- Manages Attendance Contracts.
- Advises the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- Manages all formal letters linked to FPN and legal action.
- Maintains accurate folders of evidence, intervention and support for those students who have become persistently absent.
- Maintains a strategic but personalised approach to tackling poor attendance.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.
- Organises evidence folders to pursue Fixed Penalty Notices and prepare prosecution cases as necessary.

3.5 Heads of Year / Student Support Managers

HOYS and SSMs are responsible for meeting with the Attendance Manager and APSO on a regular basis to discuss students with attendance issues. HOYS take part in the attendance meetings with parents/carers to help remove any barriers to a student's education and attendance.

3.6 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school Attendance Manager. Form tutors monitor attendance for their class from information provided by the Attendance Manager, challenging any slippage in attendance. They share early concerns with the Head of Year.

3.7 Admin/office staff

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students 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 student 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.

Students must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm (Yr7 and 8) and 1.10pm (Yr9,10 and 11) and will be kept open for 30 minutes after each registration commences.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.40am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents can notify school via telephone, email or through the Edulink App but must provide reasons.

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the student's parent/carer 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. In such circumstances, the absence will remain unauthorised until medical evidence is provided.

In the event a parent requests that their child is declared medically unfit for school they would need to direct this request to a doctor to determine.

If parents/carers have concerns about their child's health or mental wellbeing they should seek support from the student's GP or the school can arrange a referral to the school nursing services for further input.

Parents will be notified (where possible in advance) when an absence is not authorised.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This can include a screenshot of the appointment letters or reminder messages

Parents can notify school via a note sent in with their child, telephone call, email or through the Edulink App.

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

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student 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.

Students who are marked late after the register closes will receive a same day late detention at lunchtime. Three lates in any half term will result in the issuing of a Principal's Detention which runs on a Friday until 4.30pm (4.10pm leave if work is completed).

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

Identify whether the absence is approved or not (including requesting medical evidence if needed).

Identify the correct attendance code to use.

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by 10am each day.

Arrange with the parent/carer to ascertain how a return to school can be supported, where the student is absent for 10 consecutive days.

- Sending letters of concern to parent/carer where appropriate.
- Consider the appropriateness of arranging an MDT meeting if the school continues to have significant concerns regarding non-attendance.
- Conduct welfare checks to the child at home where the school has concerns about non-attendance and/or request that the police conducts a formal Welfare Check if the school has significant concerns.
- Signpost parents to appropriate services and make referrals to services where the school considers necessary, such as the school nurse.
- The school will implement individual intervention agreements in respect of each persistent non-attender and will endeavour to offer some education to children whilst they are not attending. This could include worksheets or online educational materials as appropriate.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

When a student returns to school, after more than 5 days of absence due to illness or injury. The Head of Year or Student Support Manager will ensure that they have all the necessary information for a successful reintegration back into lessons.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance data is formally reported to parents at each assessment point. This is provided in the report card. Attendance is Red Amber Green ('RAG') rated and compared to average for the cohort.

More frequent reporting to parents will occur where attendance has become a concern and the frequency will be determined on a case by case basis (see individual child's intervention agreement).

4.7 First day calling procedure

First day absence emails will be sent by 10.00am each day. Follow up texts and telephone calls start immediately afterwards and work from the youngest students upwards. These calls will start at 11.00am and continue until all absence has been verified. An attendance vehicle is also used to visit the students whose attendance is a concern.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Principal will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event which cannot reasonably be avoided.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- 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 student’s parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. We will authorise up to 3 days a school year, in line with Kirklees guidance.
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision.
- A funeral.
- Study leave coding may be used on an individual basis, particularly in relation to specific circumstances around public examinations. There is no formal period of study leave for any cohort.
- Flexi-schooling requests will be considered on an individual basis, provided parents are willing to evidence the work undertaken at home. This must be sampled on a pre-agreed basis.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The school has a clear procedure for supporting parents and students with attendance issues. The school also has a clear procedure to follow to encourage attendance where the child has significant periods of unauthorised absence. If the school continues to have concerns following the implementation of this policy the matter will be escalated to the local authority. It is important to stress that at each stage of challenge around absence, the family will be given reasonable opportunity to improve attendance and receive necessary support. There is no ‘one size fits all’ as everybody’s circumstances are unique. The key is that genuine efforts are made to improve attendance (or alternative plans are in place) where it has become a cause for concern.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school can report unauthorised absence to the local authority. The local authority has a range of sanctions they can apply to parents who fail to ensure their child’s school attendance. This includes, but is not limited to, fines or penalty notices, criminal records and imprisonment.

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

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 leave of absence taken in term time without permission. Parents who repeatedly take their children on unauthorised leave of absences may be directly prosecuted under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to 3 months.
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

Failure to pay the penalty notice could result in the local authority commencing legal proceedings against you for the offence of not ensuring your child’s regular school attendance. If found guilty, under section 444 of the Education Act, you may be fined up to £1,000 and you will receive a criminal record.

If legal action is approved by the Kirklees Legal Intervention Panel, the matter is heard in Magistrates’ Court for the offence of knowingly failing to ensure your child’s regular school

attendance (s444(1)(a) Education Act 1996). If found guilty, this carries a penalty of up to £2,500 or up to 3 months imprisonment and you will receive a criminal record.

5.4 Medical Evidence

The school will authorise absence from school with medical evidence. School is able to obtain this evidence on a student's behalf by gaining authorisation from the parent/carer or from the child if they are 16 years old. This can be done through a standard form and template pack. Medical evidence is accepted from a GP and will last for the duration of the time if stated or 6 months if no time scale is given.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Students are rewarded for demonstrating sustained high levels of attendance. Parents receive communications and students receive rewards for exemplary attendance. The House system also recognises good attendance.

A clear system of support is also in place for poor attendance. This involves letters notifying parents of the issues, unauthorising absences without medical evidence, attendance agreements and meetings with key staff to try to resolve serious absence issues. See 4.5 above.

Salendine Nook High School works closely with parents to remove any barriers to attending a school in line with the 'Working to improve school attendance' document produced by the DFE.

7. Attendance monitoring

The Attendance Manager at our school monitors student absence on a daily basis. Weekly analysis is also provided to senior leaders and data is also provided to Heads of Year. This is used to hold micro meetings with pastoral staff and senior leaders aimed around turning around the attendance of known poor attenders. Targets are set and rewards are in place once thresholds are met.

A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school every morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2), unless a specific return date is given.

An expected return should be established or, in the case of illness, a daily call should be made.

If a student's absence exceeds 5 consecutive days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

If a student's absence exceeds 10 consecutive days, the school will invite the parent/carer of the student to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the ongoing absence and the ways in which the school can support and encourage the student concerned to return to school if there are genuine reasons for the absence.

If a student's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, the school will involve the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer (APSO).

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee during the year.

Student-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 body at PDBW and through the school's Key Performance Indicators, updated three times per year and issued at Full Governors meetings.

We use attendance data to:

- Track the attendance of individual students, and year groups.
- Reward good attendance.

- Challenge poor attendance and support parents to improve the attendance of their child/ren.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. It will also be reviewed annually by The Assistant Principal in charge of Behaviour and Attitudes. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy – if the school has any concerns in respect of a child's welfare the school will refer to the child protection and safeguarding policy and make any necessary referrals.
- Behaviour policy.
- Prosecution and Fixed Penalty Notice Guidance.

Appendix 1 - Attendance Codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness. If the child is ill for more than 10 days the assessment for illness and inability to attend school

		must be made by a clinician
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student 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 student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student 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 student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Attendance Intervention Stages

Stage 1 Attendance Management

Students	Students with attendance between 94.9% - 90%
Staff Responsible	Attendance Manager / Head of Year
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Discussion with HOY2. Standard Attendance Letter 1

Stage 2 Attendance Management

Students classed as Persistent Absentee (PA)

Students	Those with no improvement following SAL1 / Students who have dropped below 90% attendance
Staff Responsible	Attendance Manager / Head of Year
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Phone Call Home2. Standard Attendance Letter 2

Stage 3 Attendance Management

Students	Those with no improvement following SAL2 / Students who have dropped below 79.9% attendance
Staff Responsible	APSO / Head of Year
Possible Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Standard Attendance Letter 32. Meeting in School to discuss barriers3. Attendance reviewed and analysed by APSO4. Standard Attendance Letter 4 (Un-authorised absence without medical evidence)5. Legal Referral for Penalty Notice for 10 Unauthorised sessions (not consecutive)6. Information about legal process shared

Stage 4 Attendance Management

Students	Those who have failed to improve attendance following Stage 3 Interventions
Staff Responsible	APSO
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Present case file to Kirklees Legal Intervention team and take advice on next steps. This may include prosecution by Kirklees.2. Legal action will be considered which may be a penalty notice or may be direct prosecution

As standard practice, a review of attendance will be completed every 4 weeks. However, this may be reduced if there is no improvement in attendance.