
Attendance and Absence Policy

Reviewed September 2022

Signed by:

S.R. Arbon-Davis Headteacher

Date: September 2022

D. Phens Chair of governors

Date: September 2022

Statement of intent

Nook Lane Junior School strongly believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. We have an established culture and ethos of encouraging good attendance. Our school's aims, vision and core values document (see school website) illustrates our quality school offer of an engaging education where learning is rich, deep and valued and the provision of a school environment where every child is known and cared for. This document also describes how the school works in partnership with parents so we can work together for the best outcomes for pupils. This school culture and clarity of purpose amongst all stakeholders in the school provides the best conditions for promoting good attendance.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, this policy whilst being rigorous in endeavouring to achieve high levels of attendance, sets out how we cultivate a safe and supportive process for attendance at school to maintain (and forge where necessary) strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents. It has been shown in DfE (2022) Working together to improve school attendance, "that it is in this framework that strategies to achieve high attendance have most success."

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our policies and practice in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

1. **A School Culture:** Promoting, modelling and maintaining high attendance through a whole school culture that celebrates its benefits.
2. **An Attendance Policy which is Understood:** Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
3. **Effective Day to Day Practices:** Having accurate registers and effective day to day processes in place to follow up absence.
4. **Thorough Monitoring, Analysis and Positive Action:** Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support and taking prompt and thorough action in order to resolve absence issues where appropriate
5. **Strong and Productive Relationships with Families:** Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance; listening carefully to any barriers to attendance and working with families to remove these barriers.
6. **Collaboration with Other Schools and Agencies:** Working collaboratively in an organised and regular basis with other schools (particularly those in Peak Edge MAT) and agencies including the local authority's Attendance and Inclusion Service. Intervening early and working with other agencies such as MAST (Multi Agency Support Team) amongst others to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
7. **Equality for All Pupils:** Ensuring equality and fairness for all including tackling disadvantage
8. **Ensuring Statutory Responsibilities are Met:** Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Schools are required to have an Attendance Officer or Attendance Champion. At Nook Lane Junior School, this is **Steven Arbon-Davis** (headteacher) who can be contacted via enquiries@nooklane.sheffield.sch.uk. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact Mr Arbon-Davis for queries or concerns about attendance.

- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a **Children Missing in Education Policy** in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role or taking on this role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and that the school will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy (at Stages 1 and 2 of the policy).

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
- Using agreed communication systems including CPOMs to inform the school Attendance Officer and other relevant senior leaders about attendance issues.
- Following agreed actions in any individual pupil attendance plans thoroughly and reporting back to the SLT on matters arising relating to each plan.

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school in liaison with the Headteacher.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance in liaison with the Headteacher and Governing Board.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying and implementing plans for intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance and working systematically for successful outcomes for pupils.
- Working at regular intervals with the Local Authority (LA) Attendance and Inclusion team for advice and support
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

4. Attendance expectations

The school has very high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and rigorously ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils. **Our target is for all children's attendance to be 97% or higher.** There are, of course, legitimate reasons for school absences (and why a child's attendance might fall below 97%) however all absence disrupts pupils' education and the higher the absence rate, the more damaging the absence becomes. This is why the school communicates and works with parents to try to reduce all absence where it is safe and suitable to do so. Where attendance is low, different children and families will need different types of support and challenge (where appropriate) to help improve their child's attendance. That support will be decided upon after a thorough work and communication with families (see section 12 below). We classify rates of absence as follows. This table is regularly communicated to parents including on end of year reports. **It is important to note that the descriptors below relate to each child's attendance not the effort of parents to bring children into school as regularly as possible.** See *attendance rate bands below*.

Expectations for Arriving at School:

The school day starts at 8:50 a.m. for pupils in Y3 and Y4 and at 9.00 a.m. for pupils in Y5 and Y6 It is expected that all children are seated, ready to start the first lesson of the day at that time. Morning tasks and staff are available to help children settle into class ready for the official start of the day.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school for the full day. Parents can bring children to school from **8. 40 a.m. (Y3/Y4) or 8.50 a.m. (Y5/Y6)** or take advantage of the school's Breakfast Club which starts at **7:45 a.m.** There is a bus stop close to school, some parking around school and a cycle/scooter shed. In these ways, our school is as accessible and flexible as it can be in terms of helping parents get children to school on-time.

Expectations for Registration:

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The start of the school day is **8:50 a.m for Y3/Y4 children and 9.00 a.m. for Y5/Y6 children.** Teachers should endeavour to take the school register promptly at this time. Pupils arriving at school after the register has been taken will be given an **L = Late arrival before the register has closed** mark.
- The morning register will be marked by **9:30am**. Pupils will receive an unauthorised late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time unless they have arrived **in school** and have been delayed by matters out of their control e.g. a queue at the office door. The morning register will also close at **9:30 a.m.** Pupils will normally receive a mark of absence **U = Arrived after registration closed** mark if they arrive in class **after 9:10am.**
- The afternoon register will be marked and will close at **1.25/1.35 (lower/upper phases) pm.** Although, theoretically, pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time, it is the responsibility of school staff to ensure children return to class from the school playground (or other parts of the school) to start afternoon school on time. If parents have taken children out of school for the morning or at lunchtime, they will be told when afternoon school starts for their child's class.

Parents and pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance, punctuality and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff. Staff will communicate any such concerns confidentially with the senior leadership team (SLT) and the SLT's attendance officer any useful or concerning information a child's attendance and/or punctuality. Any substantive or on-going issues (especially if they regard welfare or safeguarding issues) should be recorded on CPOMs as soon as possible. (See Section 16 below.)

Parents and staff should be regularly informed of the school's attendance expectations detailed above.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than five school days in a row, or more than ten school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not, in most cases, request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. Where a child's attendance has dropped below 90% (or has attendance that is causing a concern) and an initial letter of concern form has been sent to parents/carers, medical evidence will be sought for every absence due to illness or a medical appointment. Parents/carers will be informed of this before medical evidence is requested. It will be made clear to parents/carers in the initial letter of concern that the school is not asking for a medical note. Parents will also be informed that the school may need to follow the Local Authority's GP protocol.

In the case of Persistent Absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will endeavour to discuss with an Attendance and Inclusion Officer from the LA (currently Bliss Howard), at least twice per school year, the details of pupils who have attendance lower than **90%**, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation. Other pupils with attendance which is higher than 90% but who have a pattern of attendance which is concerning may also be discussed.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for longer than 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will start the process of removing the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries. The school will consult with Sheffield's Attendance and Inclusion Service, Sheffield Admissions team and other agencies working with the child. It is highly likely that the Sheffield Safeguarding team and the Police will have been contacted before this step is taken.

6. The Attendance Register

Our school uses SIMS (an electronic management information system) to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities. Designated staff members (usually class teachers) will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. Staff members input data into registers diligently and accurately. They understand their role in the context of, on-going absence monitoring, reducing pupils' absence and working with families and other staff following the ethos and practices outlined in this policy.

This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

7. Authorising Parental Requests for Leave of Absence for their Child

Requests for Exceptional Leave of Absence

Parents/carers will be required to request certain types of absence in advance in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents/carers to contact the headteacher by completing an exceptional leave request form prior to taking this leave (See attachment) at **least twenty days prior** to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will pay careful consideration to the reasons parents give exceptional leave requests and will be sensitive to the needs of the child and the family.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays unless it can **be proven** that for employment or other reasons a holiday cannot be taken in the thirteen weeks of annual school holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- In the first two weeks of a new school year
- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods. Statutory assessment dates will be given to parents as early as possible in the new school year.
- In most cases, when a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence. The headteacher may use discretion for a minimal number of unauthorised late codes.
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 % for any reason. For requests received in the first half term of the new school year, attendance data from the previous school year will be used.
- Holiday requests where parents do not provide evidence that a holiday cannot be taken in the 13 weeks of annual school holidays. (See employer's standard letter)
- Where the reason for exceptional leave request is clearly not exceptional and could normally be expected to happen for most children and families e.g. a milestone birthday celebration

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school will usually send a request to the local authority for a fine to be issued to parents for periods of unauthorised leave which are **5 days or longer**. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. SEND- and health-related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHCPs (Education Health Care Plans) or Ill Health Plans (including reduced timetable plans) that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) policies and procedures outlined in the school's PSHE and SEND policies.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the local authority's Attendance and Inclusion team if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the Attendance and Inclusion team with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure parents/carers know how to find out information about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil (where appropriate and with the consent of parents/carers) to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. This may form part of a child's SEN Support Plan/My Plan /EHCP or as part of a reduced timetable return to school plan. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

- Liaising with the parents/carers regarding medication and providing medication in school where parents/carers have completed and signed the school's administering medication in school form and where this complies with school policy.

Such measures should be agreed with parents/carers ahead of attendance wherever possible and in every case in regards to medication.

The school will inform all parents/carers about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality at parents' evenings and in the annual report to parents. It will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally through school newsletters, the school's website and school social media.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the member of the SLT who is the school's attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets. The sybhealthiertogether.nhs.uk document provided by the NHS is a useful guide to establish whether a child can attend with the presenting illness, and if not, the length of time they should be absent for. This can be referred to by staff within school and shared with parents/carers in person, via your school website and/or via other communication channels. Sheffield Children's Hospital Health Needs in Education referral. Work with the Attendance and Inclusion team to liaise with health professionals and triggering the GP protocol arrangements for the sharing of health data if (See section 15)

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. MAST, children's social care or the LA's Attendance and Inclusion team, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- The attendance section in school reports
- A standard item at parents' evening
- Annual certificates for excellent attendance (97% and above) Certificates for improved attendance

10. Monitoring, analysing and responding to absence data

Nook Lane Junior School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

The school's attendance officer/champion will record how successfully the school's work is impacting on school attendance as a whole and in relation to other groups and make professional, informed judgements on the reasons for patterns in the data.

The school's attendance officer/champion will bring analysis on all individual persistent absentees (those with attendance below 90%) and those children whose attendance is becoming a concern (90-94.9%) **and** have concerning patterns of attendance to regular **triage meetings**. These meetings will include other relevant members of the SLT including the DSL, SENDCO and the member of staff with responsibility for disadvantaged pupils. At the **triage meeting** an action plan will be written for each child.

Process:

Once pupils are identified, the support process to help increase attendance will align to the following framework.



Assess Identify the following:

- The reason preventing the child attending regularly
- What has already been implemented to improve the child's attendance?
- The needs across Education, Health and Care
- Has the child's voice been captured, what do they need to happen so they can attend?
- Have the staff working most closely with the child got any concerns or suggestions? What information does CPOMs provide?
- What support is required to improve the attendance?
- What interventions may be required to improve the child's attendance?
- What further assessments may be required?
- Has the child's health been considered? Have you received any medical evidence? What more do we need to know?
- Is the child a Young Carer, and is this having an impact on their attendance?
- The patterns on 'by-lesson or 'by-day' attendance', and if patterns are evident speak to those teachers.
- If siblings are having the same absences. Have you contacted the school the siblings attend? If unsure which schools, ask your linked Attendance & Inclusion Officer.
- Are there any SEND needs affecting attendance? If so are the child's attendance needs supported by the SEN Support Plan, My Plan or EHCP? When was the last review?

Timetable:

In the first half of the **Autumn Term**, all persistent absentees (and other children whose attendance is concerning) will receive an '**initial letter of concern**' (see template) from the school's Attendance Officer. The letter will invite the parent to work with the school to help improve the child's attendance. It will emphasise the school's wish to have a united collaborative approach to helping improve attendance for that child. The letter will ask parents to provide medical evidence for all absences until their child's attendance improves. Parents will be told that this is standard practice.

The Attendance Officer/Champion will formally monitor attendance of children identified as having attendance causing concern on a **monthly basis**. On an on-going basis, the attendance Officer/Champion will monitor attendance and act accordingly in relation to information on absence passed to them by other staff including the administration staff. School admin staff will also be asked to ensure full explanations for any absences from parents/carers and remind them of the need to provide medical evidence for their child's absence to be authorised. They will be asked to communicate all concerning patterns or reasons for absence to the school's attendance officer as soon as possible using CPOMs for any serious or concerning information.

It is important to note, that where the Attendance Officer/Champion is concerned by on-going data patterns **for any child**, steps to resolve this may be done at an earlier stage including meetings with parents and involvement of the Attendance and Inclusion team.

The child's class teacher and any linked teaching assistants will be made aware of all children in their class identified as having concerning attendance. They will be asked to feedback on relevant information shared with them by the child or by parents to the school's attendance officer, using CPOMs for any serious or concerning information.

In January, those parents/carers of pupils (contacted in the autumn term) whose attendance has not improved (or is causing concern) will be sent a **second letter of concern** (see template). This letter will invite parents/carers to a formal meeting to help resolve the persistent absence. The letter will still stress that the school wishes to use a collaborative approach to resolve the situation but will mention potential consequences of their child's attendance not improving. Parents/carers will be told that if they do not attend this meeting, that it will be held in their absence. The Attendance and Inclusion Officer may be invited to meetings where it is felt their input would be useful.

The attendance officer will then communicate with other members of staff in the same way as after the Autumn term's data analysis point.

If attendance does not improve satisfactorily after this meeting and there are no unavoidable factors for this e.g. evidenced prolonged ill health, the attendance officer will follow guidance in Sections 13 and 14 of this policy (see above) in an attempt to improve attendance at a multi-agency level.

The school will focus particularly on pupils with the highest rates of absence, and will work with the LA's Attendance and Inclusion Service and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also judged by the school's DSL to be at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If a child's attendance does not improve to expected levels (at least 95%) during four weeks after attendance meeting following a second letter of concern, a fixed penalty fine will be issued.

12. Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for the school's process of attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after at least two school terms and after a full 'Plan, Do, Review' process, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding formal meeting (in addition to meetings held within the support phase of the process) with parents and the school's attendance officer. The LA Attendance and Inclusion team will be invited to the meeting.
- Working with the LA's Attendance and Inclusion Team to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will always work with the LA Attendance and Inclusion service to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort should the percentage of unauthorised absence meet local authority thresholds.

The process is as follows:

Attendance Legal Requests

An Attendance and Inclusion Social Worker (AISW) from the local authority supports schools with the attendance legal process

All schools have a link AISW from the attendance legal team. In the absence of your link worker, please contact Sheffieldinclusion&attendance@sheffield.gov.uk

Prosecution is the last resort, and we support schools to provide the child and family with help and assistance in accessing their education wherever we can. Our aim is to ensure that the school has exhausted all avenues of support before considering the legal route.

- Evidence to show the School Attendance Officer/s have been involved for a minimum of 6 school weeks.
- Process of Assess, Plan, Do, Review is evidenced in line with the attendance response.
- Copies of the letters sent to parents making them aware of their child's attendance concern. These letters should be ones provided by the LA, or ratified by the LA.
- Evidence of any contact or plan that has been made with parents and the young person to ensure they are aware of the attendance concerns
- Evidence, if you are aware of siblings in other schools that you have liaised with them to coordinate your support, as the Local Authority will work with the whole family.
- Evidence that identified actions have been completed by the school, and parents/pupils have been supported to complete their actions, with regular reviews where appropriately

Penalty Notice Warning Letter (PNWL)

The Local Authority, in consultation with schools (and other agencies where appropriate), will be responsible for the decision to issue Penalty Notice Warning Letters. This will ensure consistent practice across **all** schools in Sheffield, assist in avoiding school / home conflicts and ensure that Penalty Notice Warning Letters are not being issued where it is inappropriate to do so, or where the Local Authority would be unable to support progression to court.

The AISW will check whether any current involvement by Social Care or any other service would prevent the case being progressed to Court.

Where penalty notice warning letters are initially agreed in principle by the AISW, these will be subject to final checks to ensure that the legal process is appropriate.

When the checks are complete and there is no change to the initial agreement the AISW will notify the school that a penalty notice warning letter can be sent out.

Monitoring of the PNWL period should be carried out by the school's Attendance Officer. If there is absence during the monitoring period, then a period of complaint will be provided to the school if the decision to proceed with a penalty notice is made by the Attendance and Inclusion Social Worker. **Final paperwork should be submitted by school within 21 days.**

Penalty notice paperwork required from school includes (as a minimum).

- Head teacher's Certificate
- Case Summary covering the period of complaint
- Evidence of the Attendance Response being followed including the APDR
- An up-to-date attendance certificate

All proformas will be supplied by the AISW.

This information would prove that during the period of complaint, the parents/carers were aware of the child's poor attendance.

If a pupil achieves full attendance during the Penalty Notice warning period, the School's Attendance Officer should continue to monitor the attendance and send a continue to monitor letter to the parents/carer. If deterioration occurs in later weeks, then they should consult with the AISW regarding further involvement in the legal process.

– it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents must submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent/carer in writing of their decision within two weeks of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the headteacher will ensure a lunchtime pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Pupils will leave the school premises at least 5 minutes after the start of lunch and will return no later than 5 minutes before the end of lunch.

Parents/carers will be required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off the premises – the pupil will be signed out and back in using SIMS at the school office. A member of staff will be available at the school office before the pupil leaves the premises and upon their return to sign them back in. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff at the school office has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents/carers will be able to withdraw their request at any time – the request will be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Permission will be updated on a termly basis. Parents/carers must submit a new letter to request lunch time absence and this will be considered by the headteacher in the same way as the first request.

Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence. It does not simply refer to pupils not attending school without their parent/s' knowledge.

All staff are actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by 8:50a.m (Y3 & Y4) or 9.00 a.m. (Y5 & Y6) where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must 'check out' at the school office and 'check in' again on their return. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school premises during the school day without a known adult collecting them.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

11. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
12. Parents/carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, if the process went beyond step 4, and policies, procedures and staff responses will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

16. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 97% – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the governing board. The next scheduled review date for this policy is Autumn 2025

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.