

Attendance Policy

Chesterfield Primary

School

Academic Year 2024-2025

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 pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Proactively manage and improve attendance across the school community
- Working with pupils and parents/carers to remove any barriers to attendance and punctuality by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place

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](#)
- [working-together-to-improve-school-attendance](#) 2024

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and Responsibilities

Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies

The Trust Board and the Local Governing Bodies are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. They will:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the Trust's ethos and policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends and help school
- Leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it the most
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

At Chesterfield there is a focus on improving attendance through a whole school approach:

- Develop and promote a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance
- Embed attendance incentives to recognise and reward improvements in attendance
- Raise attendance and reengagement of persistently absent pupils
- Enforce attendance through statutory intervention when required
- Implement early intervention to raise attendance and remove barriers
- Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance
- Ensure an accurate attendance register

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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

Designated Senior Leader

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance in school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Overseeing attendance data analysis
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents/carers

At Chesterfield Primary School the Headteacher Sarah Roberts is supported in the strategic monitoring of attendance by the Deputy Headteacher Androulla Georgiou

Attendance Officer

The school Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Designated Senior Leader
- Works with Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

At Chesterfield Primary School the Attendance Officer is Lorraine Lewis. For any matter related to attendance she can be contacted by telephone: 01992 760 678
email: office@chesterfieldprimary.org

School Office Staff

School office staff take calls from parents/carers about absence and record it on the school management information system.

Class Teachers

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

Recording Attendance

Attendance Register

Each school will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. Each school will take an attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Each school will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.45am. Registers are taken at 8.55am and kept open until 9.00am. Pupils arriving after the register has been taken will be marked as late (L) and pupils arriving after 9.30am will be marked as absent (U). The code U represents half a day absence.

At Chesterfield Primary School the afternoon sessions start at 12:30 for Early years and KS1 and 13:30 for KS2.

Unplanned Absence

Each school marks 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 pupil'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.

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.

At Chesterfield Primary School the pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible.

Notify the school about any absence by:

Tel: 01992 760 678

email: office@chesterfieldprimary.org

Planned Absence

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

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.

Pupil's parent/carer must apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. (Section 5: Term-time absences the school can authorise)

At Chesterfield Primary School: any planned absence during term time must be requested by completing an absence request form obtained from the school office.

Lateness and Punctuality

All pupils should arrive at school on time, ready for learning.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the code L
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the code U

At Chesterfield Primary School our procedures for monitoring and responding to lateness are:

- Parents/carers must sign in and record how many minutes late

- Weekly monitoring of all lateness
- Talking to parents/carers at the gate/phone-calls to identify reasons for lateness
- Supportive meetings are offered to parents/carers following repeated lateness
- For every late session, texts are sent to Parents/carers notifying how many minutes late

Following Up Absence

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

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

Reporting to Parents/Carers

Each school reports to parents/carers on their child's attendance record annually in the written end-of-year report.

Where there are concerns about a child's attendance, each school has their own reporting procedure.

At Chesterfield Primary School we:

- Report to parents/carers termly on their child's attendance record
- Send concern of low attendance letters/phone-calls to parents carers
- Offer early intervention support meetings to parents/carers whose children's attendance becomes a concern
- For chronic low attendance will enforce local authority sanctions via the Educational Welfare Service

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for Term-Time Absence

Headteachers will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term-time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion.

Each 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 pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm the day/s requested are "set apart" for religious observance
- 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

Reducing Persistent Absence

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee and the school will put in support arrangements to address this as a matter of urgency.

At Chesterfield Primary School our procedures for targeting unauthorised absence include:

- Meetings to offer support and agree improvement targets

- Letters explaining any concern
- Weekly monitoring
- Early intervention meetings with the Educational Welfare Officer
- Parent workshops to explain the impact of attendance

Legal Sanctions

Where there are unresolved attendance concerns, and absences remain unauthorised the matter is likely to be referred to the Local Authority's Educational Welfare Service, whereby court action may be considered. An additional sanction can include a penalty notice, following the Enfield Local Authority framework '[Code of Conduct for Issuing Education & Exclusion Related Penalty Notices January 2015](#)' and the Department for Education's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice includes consideration of:

- 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 issued with a penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £80 within 21 days or £180 within 21 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Each school has a comprehensive range of strategies to promote good attendance, referring to strategies contained in the guidance from the [Department for Education](#).

At Chesterfield Primary School we:

- Promote good attendance with incentives and rewards
- Inform parents of their child's attendance and explain how good attendance leads to attainment
- Include pupil's voice on improving attendance with our attendance ambassadors

Attendance Monitoring

Each school monitors pupil absence regularly and thoroughly in order to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those pupils identified as being in need of intervention and support.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. Schools will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the Trust Board and Local Education Committee.

Links with Other Policies This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

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

Attendance codes currently in use

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
K	Education provision provided by LA	Education provision arranged by a local authority, rather than the school
J1	Interview	Leave of absence to attend an interview for employment or admission into another educational institution
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C1	Other Authorised Absence	Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Other Authorised Absence	Pupils on part-time timetables
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.

R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
I01	Illness	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for students absent due to non-coronavirus related illness (unless the truthfulness of the claim is in question). This code should not be used for medical or dental appointments.
I02	Confirmed case of Covid-19	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for pupils who have a confirmed case of coronavirus.
The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.		
G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.
These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.		
D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.

X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y1	Unable to attend	Absence due to transport normally provided not being available.
Y2	Unable to attend	Widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Part of school closed.
Y4	Unable to attend	Unexpected whole school closure (different from # for planned closures).
Y5	Unable to attend	Pupils in the criminal justice system.
Y6	Unable to attend	Absence due to public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend	Any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed To Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.

Appendix 2: Working Together To Improve Attendance (DfE May 2022)

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

