



| | |
|--------|------------|
| Policy | Attendance |
|--------|------------|

| Committee | Date of Ratification | Review Date/term | Staff Responsible | Circulation |
|-----------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Student | Spring 2022 | Spring 2024 | Assistant Headteacher | Website File Shared staff |

The school has a detailed Risk Register which the Governing Body uses to monitor and measure the impact of its decisions as well as informing its planning.

The Risk Register also includes the School's Policy Statement for Risk and Opportunity Management.

To ensure that Risk Management permeates the working of the Governing Body, this policy is referenced in the Risk Register and the committee responsible for the policy should consider the "likeliness" and "impact" level for the appropriate risks.

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Aims and Principles | 2 |
| 2. Legislation and guidance | 2 |
| 3. Authorised and unauthorised absence | 3 |
| 4. Strategies for promoting attendance | 3 |
| 5. Persistent Absenteeism | 4 |
| 6. Absence Procedures | 5 |
| 7. Punctuality | 5 |
| 8. Leave of Absence in term time | 6 |
| 9. Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups | 6 |
| 10. Children at Risk of missing education | 7 |
| 11. Removal from the School Roll | 7 |
| 12. Elective Home Education | 7 |
| 13. Roles and responsibilities | 8 |
| 14. Links with other policies | 10 |
| 15. Useful Contacts | 10 |
| Appendix 1: Attendance Codes | 11 |

1. Aims and principles:

The legal responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age attend school regularly, and on time, rests with parents/carers. Permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Achieving good attendance, however, is the shared responsibility of parents, students, the school and, where necessary, the Education Welfare Service.

Our school aims to meet its 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 in school to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. The school aims for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the school community to reach for excellence. For students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and should attend school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

We expect that students' attendance and punctuality should be as close to 100% as possible.

The minimum expected level of attendance for this school is 96% attendance.

Regular absence will seriously affect a student's learning. For example, attendance of 90% over an academic year is nearly one month's absence from school.

Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines and in turn may affect the learning of others in the same class.

There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement at GCSE level, with poor attenders much less likely to achieve five good passes at GCSE, including English and Maths. Similarly, research clearly demonstrates a strong correlation between high absenteeism and poor student attainment when studying A Level subjects. In accordance with [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#), we recognise that Children Missing Education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

The school has an up to date admissions register and attendance register for all students currently on roll. These registers are kept in accordance with the legal requirements and local and national guidance that is in force at any time. We will keep every entry on the attendance register for at least three years after the date on which the entry was made.

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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association as an academy.

3. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence:

An authorised absence may be approved for a morning or afternoon away from school for an appropriate reason, such as medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are where the school does not consider the absence to be reasonable and for which no "leave of absence" has been approved. Reducing unauthorised absence from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a student's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others. This type of absence may result in school sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy
- unexplained absences
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time

Whilst a child may be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they might also be reluctant to attend school. Information for parents and carers on ERSA (Emotionally Related School Avoidance) can be found [here](#). Any problems with regular attendance should be discussed with the school as soon as possible so that a shared plan can be agreed that maintains their attendance and enables them to achieve. If you have any concerns please contact either your child's Tutor, Head of Year, the Attendance Officer or Student Support Officer.

4. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school promotes and maintains high levels of attendance by:

- having a clear statement in the [school prospectus](#) and on [our school website](#)
- employing a Student Support Officer to work with Heads of Year, Key Stage leaders, and external agencies to ensure high levels of attendance
- sending letters and communicating expectations through the parent newsletter
- sending targeted letters to parents/carers of students whose absence has become a cause for concern
- tutors discussing the importance of good attendance with the students
- the promotion of regular attendance and punctuality in assemblies

- having a system of appropriate rewards for groups and individuals who have consistently high levels of attendance and improved attendance
- using 'In Touch absence alert'
- including on every written report that parents receive details of their child's attendance and punctuality.

In identifying further ways we can improve school attendance, we make full use of the range of strategies and interventions included in the [DfE guidance](#) and appropriate staff attend all relevant training.

Students with Emotionally Related School Avoidance (ERSA) will be supported through use of the [Achieving for Children ERSA toolkit](#) to encourage them to reintegrate into school life.

5. Persistent Absenteeism:

A student will become a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance drops below 90%. Persistent absentees are carefully monitored by our Student Support Officer and Heads of Year. Parents/carers will be invited to an attendance meeting where targets and actions will be agreed. Students whose attendance is not-improving will then be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Legal Sanctions

Schools have to inform the Local Authority of any students who are regularly absent from school, have irregular attendance, or have missed 10 school days or more without the school's permission. Schools also have a safeguarding duty, under [section 175 Education Act 2002](#), to investigate any unexplained absences.

Achieving for Children's Education Welfare Service has the authority to enforce the law in respect of school attendance for children of compulsory school age who attend a Richmond School. Parents can be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice by the Local Authority for their child's non-attendance. Achieving for Children have published a '[Code of Conduct](#)' for Fixed Penalty Notices. The issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice is to prevent the escalation of unauthorised absences and to avoid prosecution under Section 444(1a) of the Education Act.

Circumstances for issuing a Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence. The LA must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to show the parent has committed an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. Some examples of when it might be considered appropriate to serve a Penalty Notice include in the following circumstances:

- A child has been referred to Education Welfare and casework is in progress but the parents are not supporting the school or engaging with Education Welfare activity to bring about improved attendance and no other legal sanctions are underway.
- Where unauthorised absence levels are unacceptable
- Where parents are unwilling to sign a contact offering support and attendance is below 90% over a five week period without justification
- Where parenting contracts or orders have been unsuccessful, or not complied with
- Where a student is in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during days one to five of a fixed term or permanent exclusion

What is a penalty notice?

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (absences without a valid reason).

Depending on circumstances such cases may result in prosecution under the Education Act 1996.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in court. Payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice enables parents/carers discharge what is potentially the liability for a criminal conviction.

What are the costs?

The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receiving a notice and £120 if paid after this but within 28 days

We obviously prefer to work in cooperation with parents or carers to support any child who is struggling to attend school regularly, as does the Local Authority, and we would exhaust all available avenues before referring to the Local Authority to start a formal monitoring period, with a review date after which the Local Authority might issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

There is no right of appeal against a Fixed Penalty Notice. If this is not paid, the Local Authority can proceed to prosecution or withdraw the notice. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Sixth Form students

In the case of our sixth form, where attendance is no longer compulsory, the student may lose their place if their persistent absence does not improve after a range of support measures and interventions have been exhausted.

6. Absence Procedures:

Years 7 – 13 parents/carers should:

- Phone the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and every subsequent day of absence: 020 8892 7607

Years 12 – 13 parents/carers can also email the school with the reason for any absence: sixthform@orleanspark.school

If a child is absent the school will:

- Telephone or send a text on the first day of absence if the school has not received any communication from a parent/carer. It is important for parents/carers to respond to the message with a reason for their child's absence
- Continue to contact a parent/carer until a reason for absence is obtained

7. Punctuality:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable; students arriving late are disruptive to other students' learning.

The school day starts at 8.40 am and students are expected to be in their Tutor room by that time. A bell will ring at 8.35 am indicating that students must make their way to their Tutor room. If a child arrives at Tutor Time after 8.40 am they will be marked as late and will serve a 15 minute detention after school on the allotted day for their Year group.

If a student arrives after 9.00 am and the school does not receive an explanation from a parent/carer, the student will attend a 30 minute detention on the allotted day for their Year group.

If a student arrives late to school three times within the same week they will attend a 1 hour detention after school on Friday. For the purposes of this sanction, the school week will be considered as running from Friday-Thursday to enable students and parents to be given 24 hours notice before receiving this sanction.

At 9.30 am the registers will be closed. If a student arrives after this time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site. This will not count as a present mark and it may also result in an unauthorised absence.

8. Leave of Absence in Term Time:

There is no entitlement in law for non essential absences during term time. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion. The Headteacher will only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and will determine the length of time the student can be away from school. Family holidays taken during term time will not be authorised. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

All applications for Leave of Absence including external exams, sport fixtures, music or sports competitions or funerals should be made in writing to the Headteacher who will consider the application. It is important that parents/carers understand when Leave of Absence will not be agreed by the school for example:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods, GCSEs, A Levels or any other public examinations
- When a student's attendance record already includes some unauthorised absence
- Where a student's attendance rate is already below (96%) or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking leave

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised.

9. Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups

The school is aware that poor attendance patterns and sudden poor attendance can be both a symptom and an indicator of wider safeguarding and welfare concerns. The school will always seek to identify the wider problems underlying poor attendance and put into place appropriate interventions to tackle the underlying issues. Where the school considers that a student's attendance patterns raises concerns about their welfare or safety, it will implement further actions, including referrals to appropriate services.

10. Children at risk of missing education

The school will notify Children's Services and the Education Welfare Service of any child missing education via a SPA (Single Point of Access) referral where there has been no communication from the parent/carer or if the absence is unauthorised. The school will also continue to make attempts to contact the parent/carer to establish the location, safety and well-being of the child. The Student Support Officer will ensure that a home visit is arranged if there is no parental contact within three days of an absence and any referral will be made no later than five days after the day of first absence.

[DfE Children Missing Education guidance](#)

11. Removal from the school roll

The school will inform Achieving for Children of any student who is going to be removed from the admissions register.

Where a student has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days the student can be removed from the admission register. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. We will inform Achieving for Children on the fifth day of absence.

Our school is aware that off-rolling is unlawful. Ofsted defines off-rolling as, "the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil." We are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

12. Elective Home Education

Parents/carers have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education but this does not have to be at a school.

A child is of compulsory school age from the school term after his/her 5th birthday until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they reach the age of 16. Additionally, the Government has now raised to 18 the age at which a young person must participate in education or training, which can include home education.

There is no requirement for parents/carers to obtain consent from the school or Achieving for Children to educate their child at home but they are required to put their intentions in writing to the Headteacher and the Education Welfare Service. We would always request a meeting so that we could ensure that parents or carers were fully aware of all the implications and consequences of such a decision.

[AfC Elective Home Education guidance](#)

13. Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Governors:

- To continue to monitor student attendance
- To hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- To ensure the school acts in accordance with all relevant legislation.

The Senior Leadership Team:

- To monitor and evaluate student attendance with regard to:
 - Attendance policies in accordance to Achieving for Children and DfE guidance
 - Management, organisation and administration including day to day operations
 - Impact on curriculum delivery
 - Student attainment and progress
 - Student behaviour
- To regularly review attendance practice and discuss at Senior Leadership and staff meetings
- To work with the allocated Education Welfare Officer from Achieving for Children
- Where possible, to involve the whole school community in our decision making
- To provide training and support for staff, students, parents/carers and governors when appropriate
- To ensure excellent safeguarding practice
- To report attendance outcomes to the governing body on a termly basis.

The Student Support Officer:

- To monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual student level.
- To monitor the 'Red List' daily and follow up any absence immediately.
- To report concerns about attendance to the relevant Assistant Headteachers and Headteacher.
- To meet with Heads of Year 7-13 weekly to analyse attendance reports from SIMs with a focus on reducing persistent absence.
- To support Heads of Year with tracking of student attendance and implementation of rewards and other interventions.
- To work with external agencies, including the EISS and EWS to tackle persistent absence
- To attend any necessary legal meetings with regards to attendance.
- To carry out a home visit if there is no parental contact within three days.
- To follow up absences and address concerns with students and agree on strategies to improve attendance.
- To liaise regularly with the member of SLT responsible for Attendance and Punctuality, to discuss attendance issues.

The Attendance Officer:

- To be the first point of contact for all attendance issues in the school.
- To take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

- To be responsible for maintaining accurate registers, inputting any amendments as required.
- To check daily registers have been taken at 9.00am and at 1.55pm, chasing up missing registers/marks.
- To monitor and record 6th form attendance, ensuring that registers are completed and any absences are followed up, liaising with the Sixth Form student support officer as required.
- To follow up on reasons for absence using agreed systems including first day absence calling and/or texting to parents/carers.
- To produce statistical data relating to attendance patterns of groups within the school.
- To produce weekly reports and regular updates for staff (e.g. HT, AHT, HOY, SSO and tutors) on attendance.
- To provide effective communication links, passing appropriate information to parents/carers, students, EWO, and colleagues.
- To be responsible for the signing in and out process.
- To complete Local Authority absence returns every half-term.
- To oversee the 'gate lates' system including maintaining the late detention rota - Monday-Tuesday (Y10/11 only) Wednesday and Friday (Y7-11) after school.
- To monitor the red list to ensure the whereabouts of at risk students are known at all times and protect their safeguarding.

The Head of Year:

- To review attendance of their year group weekly.
- To review Persistent Absence list weekly and take action as appropriate to improve attendance.
- To meet regularly with the Student Support Officer to discuss action with regards to students whose attendance falls below 97%.
- To ensure letters are sent home where there are attendance concerns.
- To monitor closely the attendance of students whose attendance falls below 94%.
- To supervise after school detentions.
- To organise and oversee the support for students who have been on long term absence.
- To attend any necessary legal meetings with regards to attendance.

The Tutor:

- To be responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis in morning tutor time (8.40-9.00am), using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- To return any notes regarding absence to Student Services.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality of students in the Tutor Group, particularly those whose attendance falls below 97% but is above 94%.
- To discuss attendance issues / concerns with the student.
- To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns.

Staff have additional guidance in the staff handbook (['Completion of Registers' 3.4](#))

The Subject Teacher:

- To mark a register each lesson within the first 10 minutes of the lesson starting.
- To inform Student Services of any student missing from the lesson and marking absence in the SIMS register.
- To update the register if a student arrives late to the lesson or leaves for an appointment.
- To inform the Head of Year of any attendance concerns.
- To ensure that missed work is caught up.

The Parents/Carers:

- To ensure that their child attends daily and on time.
- To contact the school before 8.30 am to explain any absence.
- To make medical appointments out of school time as far as possible.
- To avoid holidays during term time and to inform the Headteacher at least a month in advance of any planned absence.

14. Links to other policies:

This policy is linked to our safeguarding policy ([OPS Safeguarding policy](#))

15. Useful contacts:

- Single Point of Access: phone: 020 8547 5008 (from 8am to 6pm) or 020 8770 5000 (out of hours)
- [Education Welfare Service](#)
phone: 020 8487 5217 (Richmond)
Email: ews@achievingforchildren.org.uk
- [Education and Inclusion Support Service](#)
Email: EISS@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Authorised absence | | |
| C | Authorised leave of absence | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| E | Excluded | Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made |
| H | Authorised holiday | Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| I | Illness | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness |
| M | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| R | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| S | Study leave | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations |
| T | Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence | Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school |
| Unauthorised absence | | |
| G | Unauthorised holiday | Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school |
| N | Reason not provided | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| O | Unauthorised absence | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence |
| U | Arrival after registration | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed |

| Code | Definition | Scenario |
|------|---|--|
| X | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |
| Y | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody |

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Z | Pupil not on admission register | Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school |
| # | Planned school closure | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day |