



As a church school, our vision is for each child to have a love of learning, hope, confidence, wisdom and respect for all.

'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10

Attendance Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the importance of good attendance and punctuality and the way in which school will promote and ensure this. It addresses the processes by which we will support families if there are issues around school attendance and punctuality. Nationally, pupils are expected to attend 96% of the school year and at St Peter's Brafferton we aim to meet this level of attendance as a minimum.

Scope

This policy is for school staff, families, governors and external agencies.

Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Legislation

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures.

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Roles and responsibilities

Role of Governors

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including keeping up to date with the latest guidance
- Regularly monitoring, reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring the Safeguarding Governor monitors attendance in their termly visit

Role of Headteacher

- 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 (where support is required)
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- To support families to improve their child's attendance to meet the national targets.
- To escalate attendance issues where necessary, as directed by the Local Authority which may result in issuing fixed-penalty notices (see appendix A).
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance

Role of Attendance Lead (most Senior Teacher in absence of Headteacher)

- Taking responsibility for attendance across the school and liaising with families
- Work in close contact with the Safeguarding Lead
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
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The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs Sarah Anderson and can be contacted via 01423 360250 or dsl@st-peters-brafferton.n-yorks.sch.uk

Role of School Office staff

- To take calls about attendance
- To liaise with the Headteacher if further support is required for attendance
- To contact parents if a child has not arrived by 9.15am
- To ensure registers are taken in the morning and afternoon and the correct codes are used
- To ensure registers are brought out in a fire/lockdown drill

Role of Teachers

- To take the register at 9am and 1pm each day via Scholarpack
- To promote good attendance in classrooms by starting the day punctually
- To ensure registers are completed accurately in a fire/lockdown drill
- To alert the School Office and DSL if a pupil hasn't arrived
- To speak to parents on a day to day basis about arriving at school on time and checking in with families if there are any issues school can support with
- To log patterns/issues on CPOMs so that the Headteacher/Attendance Lead is aware

Role of Parents

- Make sure their child attends school every day on time
- Liaise with school in a timely manner if there is a concern affecting their child's attendance
- Call the school to report their child's absence (illness) before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return

- Inform school in writing/email if their child needs to be taken out of school for a medical/SEN assessment/ family funeral, at least 48 hours in advance.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Role of Pupils

- Attend school every day, on time
- To speak to their teacher if they have any worries about coming to school

Procedure for Arrival at Start of School Day

- Pupils are expected to be on the school grounds from 8.50am. Helperbees from 9am.
- Doors are open from 8.50am where children can start 'early bird' tasks.
- Registration is at 9am and 1pm.
- Gates to the playground will be locked at 9.05am. Any child arriving after this time will need to report to the School Office and follow lateness procedures.

Recording attendance

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at 9am and 1pm each day. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity/appointment which we've had prior notice of
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional and unexpected 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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Data is held in conjunction with Data Protection Act 2018.

Unplanned absence (illness)

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school 01423 360250 or email admin@st-peters-brafferton.n-yorks.sch.uk (we ask parents not to use Class Dojo for this).

- If we have not heard by 9.15am from a parent/carer, a call will be made from the School Office
- The Headteacher will be made aware if contact isn't made and will call home/mobile
- Further contact will be made with all the child's named contacts
- If no contact can be made, the DSL and Headteacher will visit the home address and call the Police if there are concerns about the child's safety.

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 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

Planned absence (appointments)

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school 48 hours in advance of the appointment. Evidence of medical appointments should be shown to the School Office.

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

The pupil's parent/carer must apply for any other types of term-time absence (see appendix B) as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- If they arrive after 9am, they will be recorded late between 9am and 9.15am.

- After the register has closed (9.15am) they will be marked as an unauthorised absence, using the appropriate code (exceptional circumstances will be taken into consideration). Unauthorised absence will go towards your child's attendance percentage and you may be at risk of a fine from North Yorkshire Council.
- A separate fire register will be updated to reflect pupils present

If we identify an issue with persistent lateness (i.e. more than once a week), parents will be notified by writing and then, if required, asked to attend a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss how school can support the family.

Following up an unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will involve an education welfare officer

Reporting to parents/carers

Attendance data will be published to parents each term, alongside termly progress reports, and in the school newsletter every two weeks. Attendance data will also be shared with the Governors once a term and with the Safeguarding governor.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form,

accessible via the School Office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- 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
- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions am or pm (equivalent of 5 days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil

- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution or has been previously given.
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis

- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

In-school barriers: the school will work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where appropriate, the school will work with families to produce a plan of support.

Out of school barriers: Where out of school barriers are identified, the school will signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, the school will conduct the early help assessment and act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, the school will continue to work with the local authority and partners.

Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHCP) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that are related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

The school will facilitate communications with the school's pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual health care plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.

Any planning for a pupil will consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable longer period of absence

In cases of a lengthy absence, schools will work with pupils and families to establish a support plan:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying reason for absence.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.

- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

Promoting Good Attendance

We celebrate good attendance across school with our high expectations of attendance from a child's very first day. We include attendance information on our school website, share attendance data with parents in weekly newsletters and celebrate pupils who attend well at school.

Attendance monitoring

The school's Attendance Lead will monitor the attendance of monitored pupils daily. In particular, the Attendance Lead will monitor:

- All pupils
- Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent.
- Persistently absent <90%
- Severely absent < 50%
- Pupils with medical conditions
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with a social worker
- Looked After Pupils
- Pupils considered to have poor attendance

Pupil-level absence data will be collected every day by DfE. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

We consider pupils with SEND and vulnerable pupils and support families into school.

We expect at least 95% attendance across the school year.

If parents are experiencing difficulties getting their child to school punctually, support in school and support through external agencies will be offered.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- School will speak to parents in the first instance, then write formally if this persists and invite the family in for a meeting.

This policy will be shared via the school website at <https://www.st-peters-brafferton.n-yorks.sch.uk/policies/> Paper copies are available from the school office on request.

Reviewed by: Full Governing Body

Review cycle: Annually

Date reviewed: October 2024

Date of next review: October 2025

APPENDIX A

Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (2024)

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.</p>

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Name of Pupil (s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

I request permission for my child to be absent from school

From _____ To _____ **Total number of school days** _____

Exceptional Circumstances for Request

This section must be answered in full by parent/carer

Signature of parent/carer _____ Date _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

Current Attendance:

This is: Excellent Above average Average Below Average Poor

I have considered carefully your request for leave in term-time and on this occasion I will/will not be authorising your child(ren)'s absence for the following reason (s):-

Seen by Headteacher (signature): _____ Date: _____

Decision reached: _____ Date reply: _____

returned: