



Small school, big heart

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

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Promoting 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

Our school encourages good attendance through making the school day and pupils' learning enjoyable. We aim to encourage a positive attitude to school to nurture learning in all pupils. Children need to feel that their contribution in school is valued and all staff care about them as individuals.

Legislation

This policy meets the requirements of the statutory document '[working together to improve school attendance](#)' 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.

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

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

- To be at school on time and be ready to learn for 9am in the classroom
- 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.
- 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 9.00am. 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

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

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

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay for a fine of £60, which rises to £120 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as 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 the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for 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 newsletters and celebrate pupils who attend well at school.

Attendance monitoring

- Monitor attendance and absence data fortnightly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing 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: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2026

APPENDIX A

Policy statement – Pupils’ Punctuality and Attendance

(To be read in conjunction with DfE and NYCC policy statements and NYC document “Information for Parents/Carers - Rights and responsibilities relating to school attendance and behaviour” available on the school’s website alongside this policy.)

The highest standards of attendance and punctuality are encouraged for all pupils at all times.

School will endeavour to work with all parents/carers to assist them in carrying out their duties as required by the DfE.

Where a child’s attendance causes concern, the following parameters and actions will be considered by the Headteacher:

(Each case will be considered individually based on circumstances)

Cause for concern	Action(s) to be considered
95% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	• Attendance will be monitored by the School and attendance history considered • Contact with parents/carers will be made if deemed necessary and discussion of causes and any support that can be offered
90% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	• Letter to parents/carers asking them to work with school to improve attendance • Discussion with parents/carers to develop a plan of action, including offer of support. This may include referral to Early Help
85% attendance or below at any point within an academic year	• Discussion with Early Help and Children’s Social Care regarding possible referral for consideration within NYCC policy and practice guidance
Repeated incidences of illness-related absence	• Discussion with parents/carers • Referral to school nurse • Request that parents/carers provide proof of doctor’s involvement (appointment card with child’s name on / letter / copy of prescription etc) • Work for the pupil might be sent home to be completed
Repeated arrival at school after 9.00am This will be marked in the class register as a LATE.	• Letter to parents/carers requesting that the matter is addressed and

	offering support • An action plan to be established • Consideration of request from outside agencies through Early Help if appropriate
Repeated arrival at school after 9.15am Each occasion will be marked in the class register as an unauthorised absence for the session.	• An action plan to be established • Consideration of request from outside agencies through the Early Help or Children's Social Care for consideration within NYCC policy and practice guidelines.

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: _____