

Reach Academy Hanworth Park

Attendance Policy

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Academies to note: This is a Reach template, but it must be checked for local context and procedures before being submitted for approval.	

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1. 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 statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance.

Attendance in school is vital for academic success which we know leads to a choice of life and opportunity. Research suggests that just 4 days of missed school per academic year can result in significantly lower achievements. This guidance is applicable for our non-statutory and statutory cohort, unless otherwise specified.

The senior leader responsible for attendance is Attendance Champion, Jerome Barlow and can be contacted at attendance@reachacademy.org.uk or via phone 020 8831 1620.

2. Legislation and guidance

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 School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)

3. What do we expect?

Punctuality

- Primary and Secondary pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am. Morning registers are taken shortly after this.
- Afternoon registers are taken at 13.30pm for Primary and 13.55pm for Secondary.
- Students will be marked late with an L code if they are between 0 and 30 minutes late and a U code if they are more than 30 minutes late. It is important to note that a U code equates to a 50% absence mark for the day.
- If a Secondary student is late to school, they will sit an afterschool detention.
- Pupils that are late due to medical appointments must provide a letter showing proof of appointment.
- In exceptional circumstances (such as severe weather or significant public transport disruptions) the cut off time for late marks may be delayed at the discretion of the co - headteachers.
- If your child is late three times or more in any two week period, families will receive a phone call from the school inviting them to a meeting where additional support can be discussed. If your child is Persistently Late (6 or more lates in a term) you will receive a letter from the school that will place you on a four week punctuality target during which we would expect to see an improvement. If no improvement is seen, we will invite you to a meeting with a member of the senior leadership team and attendance officer to discuss additional support.

Notification of Absence

Parents are expected to notify the school office of absence by calling 0208 893 1099 before 8.50am on the first day of absence and each day thereafter. The school will continue to phone home every day for a period of absence, even if the reason for absence is known. We will continue to contact parents if they fail to inform the school of the reason for absence. It is essential that we know the reason for absence in order to safeguard your child.

Absence During Term Time

- The Co-headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). Family holidays are not permitted during term time.
- A leave of absence is granted at the Co-headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- We will generally mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised if your child's year to date attendance figure is at 96% or above. If your child's attendance figure is below 96%, in the majority of cases, we will require evidence to authorise their period of absence. Evidence will allow for authorisation at the discretion of the co-headteachers.
- We ask that parents make routine doctor and dental appointments outside of school hours. We understand that there can be unforeseen medical emergencies and we will be able to make exceptions in these circumstances but this will be at the discretion of the co-headteachers.

- For a day set aside exclusively for religious observance, we will authorise up to two days per year of pupil absence. In general we use The Religious festival calendar in recognition of this. Time taken beyond this will not be authorised.
- Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated via our [absence request form](#). We may request evidence to support / authorise any leave of absence, which can be emailed to attendance@reachacademy.org.uk.
- If your child is absent without authorisation, the absence will permanently be recorded as unauthorised on their attendance certificate.
- For vomiting or diarrhoea, we now follow a 24-hour rule. Pupils can return to school 24 hours after their last episode of sickness, as long as they are otherwise well enough to attend. This approach helps us balance two important priorities: limiting the spread of illness in school while also supporting good attendance and avoiding unnecessary time away from learning. If we were to experience an outbreak of norovirus, for example, we would contact all parents to explain the additional measures being put in place to prevent further spread. In such circumstances, we may temporarily adjust the 24-hour rule and communicate this clearly.

4. Non-attendance procedures

- If your child's attendance falls below 96% (regardless of authorised or unauthorised absences), we will invite you in for an attendance contract meeting in which barriers to attendance and support strategies will be discussed. We will place your child on a 4 week monitoring period, where we expect to see improvements.
- If improvements are seen, we will close the case and monitor in the usual way. If improvements are not seen and unauthorised absences continue after this, we may

begin proceedings to issue legal penalty notices to parents via a Local Authority referral.

- 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.
- For more information on issuing a penalty notice please read the LA's [Penalty notice for poor attendance document](#).

5. Complex Barriers to Attendance

- It is important to distinguish between non-school attendance, truancy and emotionally based school non-attendance, the latter being considered an emotional need. There could be a number of contributing factors to EBSNA. We use the EBSNA Assessment Tool to establish the route of the problem. Once this process has been completed we would request the appropriate involvement of services such as Education Psychologists, in order that the appropriate support can be put in place to support the student.
- All students of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable is only to be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution.

- Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) 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.
- It is the families' responsibility to inform the school of any medical condition/s their child has. It is also the families' responsibility to notify the school of any changes required in their child's Health Care Plan and/or any changes in medication. Chronic or long term illness can be defined as a long lasting and/or recurring illness or condition which is impacting significantly on a student's school attendance. The illness/condition should be professionally diagnosed by a paediatrician.
- Where a child or young person who has had a serious injury which has required regular absences or a sustained period of time off school, he/she will also be considered under the chronic illness/long term illness criteria. It should be noted that broken bones are not considered an acceptable reason for prolonged absence from school, and the school will work collaboratively with parents/carers to understand and implement appropriate adjustments that can be put in place to ensure the child is able to continue accessing their education.
- The attendance for students with a social worker is prioritised each morning. We have a daily tracking system to follow up on any absences or check in depending on the reason provided. The attendance officer always informs a student's social worker if there are unexplained absences from school.
- If the school were to be closed during the day for whatever reason, for example due to dangerous weather conditions, the school will send a text to all families to inform them and to update the school website. This will be considered an authorised absence.

- Where pupils return to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, we use a range of supportive measures to ensure that there is a smooth and successful transition.

6. Rewarding Attendance

- It is important that all stakeholders see attendance as their responsibility. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility.
- There are multiple opportunities for our students' attendance and punctuality to be rewarded on an individual, class and year group level. These rewards may differ between schools.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

8. 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](#).

K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency

Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered

#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays
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