

Attendance Policy

Village Infants School



Approved by: Governing Board

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1. 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:

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

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [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](#)

It also refers to:

- › [School census guidance](#)
- › [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- › [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- › Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- › Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- › Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- › Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- › Jo Archer is our link Governor for attendance at Village Infants

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- › Leading attendance across the school
- › 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 Amy Rix and can be contacted via 0208 270 6589 arix@village.bardaglea.org.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher/designated senior leader responsible for attendance (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Louisa Spoor and can be contacted via 0208 270 1929 lspoor@village.bardaglea.org.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes on Integris, submitting this by 9.15am and 1.40pm.

Class teachers have attendance slips in their pupil profiles to report any concerns to Amy or Louisa

Class teachers have a list of persistent absentees to flag up to Louisa and/or Amy if absent.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time (9am for Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 and 8.45am for Nursery)
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence or message via ParentMail (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- › 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

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- › The original entry
- › The amended entry
- › The reason for the amendment
- › The date on which the amendment was made
- › The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

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.

Pupils must be in their classrooms by 9am ready to learn on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30pm and will be kept open until 1.40pm.

4.2 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 office (see also section 7) or sending a ParentMail.

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 information eg prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of information. We will not ask for medical information unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment via 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 also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- › If your child is late arriving at school three times during a half term the following actions will be taken:
 - You will be sent a warning letter informing you that the school is concerned regarding your child's punctuality
 - If your child's punctuality improves no further action will be taken.
 - If your child continues to arrive late for school you will be sent a further letter inviting you to attend a Parent Panel Meeting to discuss your child's punctuality and to complete a Punctuality Action Plan in which we will agree we can support your child in arriving at school on time.

4.5 Following up 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 do a home visit
- › Identify whether the absence is approved 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 consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via a half-termly attendance letter including current attendance data specific to their child.

If a child's attendance goes below 90% parents will be notified by a letter.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 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. Headteachers are not expected to class term time family holidays as exceptional.

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 before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence [appendix 2].

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. Authorised absences will be only for the days religious observance is held and not for travel or any additional times.
- 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
- A relative is terminally ill

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers 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/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. 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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

In order to raise the children's awareness of the importance of good attendance and encourage them to want to come to school every day we have introduced the following rewards to celebrate good attendance:

- › **Leaflet**- Children joining the school to be provided with a leaflet encouraging good attendance. Leaflets will be available all year at the school office, and provided to targeted parents again where appropriate
- › **Wrist Bands** – Children who achieve 100% attendance for each term will receive a coloured wrist band. Yellow for the autumn term, blue for the spring term and green for the summer term. Wearing a wrist band will mean the children will be a member of the 100% club and will be given additional rewards during the school year. If your child is a member of the 100% please encourage them to wear their wrist band to school every day.
- › **Teddies** – George and Georgina are two teddies who are best friends and like to be together in the same class. George is given to the class in Early Years with the highest attendance for that week and Georgina is given to the class in Key Stage One with the highest attendance for that week.
- › **Attendance Trophy** – Each week the class with best attendance across the whole school will get to have the trophy for the week.
- › **Medals** – Children who receive 100% attendance during a school year will receive a medal for each year this is achieved. A bronze medal for the first year, a silver medal for the second year and a gold medal for the third year.
- › **Display at the front of the school**- Parents will see which classes have won the trophy and the bears each week. The display will have information on for parents to promote good attendance.

7. Attendance monitoring

- › The school will rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to improve the child's attendance.
- › The Attendance Lead and Officer meet weekly to thoroughly analyse attendance, identify any actions and share latest attendance with Class Teachers
- › The school will share attendance concerns with parents via phone calls, warning letters, meetings and Attendance Actions Plans.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- › Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, 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.

7.2 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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- › Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, year group leads, phase leads 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

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.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school (attendance that is less than 90%), 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
- › Take a staged approach to parent meetings. Initial meetings will be with A Rix, if attendance concerns persist then a meeting will be held with A Rix and the class teacher. On the third meeting the attendance governor will be invited to also facilitate the meeting.
- › Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- › Share attendance concerns with parents via phone calls, warning letters, meetings and Attendance Actions Plans.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Amy Rix, Deputy Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. 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.

| 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 |

Appendix 2 – Leave of Absence Request Form

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Before requesting leave in term time you need to think about:

- The lessons your child will miss
- The difficulty your child will have in catching up
- The effect it will have on your child's friendship groups
- The effect it will have on how well your child performs in school

For your information:

- Amendments were made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which took effect from 1 September 2013. From this date schools are not permitted to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- All term time holiday/leave requests must be submitted to the Headteacher with the exceptional circumstances fully explained. In order to make the decision whether to authorise leave or not, parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence supporting their circumstances.
- Parents/carers need to be aware that Penalty Notices can be issued per parent, per child for unauthorised absence from school, for unauthorised leave taken in term time and/or for pupils stopped during a Truancy Patrol (£60 if paid within 21 days; £120 if paid within 28 days as at 1 September 2013) in line with the Education (Penalty Notice Regulations) England 2013. The Council's Safeguarding and Social Inclusion Service will issue Penalty Notices on behalf of the Police, the Local Authority and the School.

Pupil Details

| | |
|-------------|--------|
| First Name: | Class: |
|-------------|--------|

Leave of Absence Request Details

| | |
|--|---|
| Start date: | Return Date: |
| Total number of days absent from school: | What Country are you travelling to [if applicable]: |
| What are the exceptional circumstances for your withdrawal from learning request that you wish the school to consider? | |

Parent Details

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Name of Parent | Signature |
|-----------------------|------------------|

Appendix 3 – Attendance Slip in Pupil Profiles for Staff Members

Attendance Concern Slip- Please give to Amy or Louisa

Pupil Name and Class:

Attendance Concern:

Any action taken (e.g. spoken to parents):

Individual Attendance Plan

ADDRESSING PERSISTENT ABSENCE

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Pupils Name | | | | | |
| Pupil class | | | | | |
| Attendance | Overall % | PA% | UA% | AA% | lates |
| | | | | | |
| History | SEN status | PP | FSM | EAL | LAC/PLAC |
| | | | | | |
| | Open to Social Care as CP /CiN/ Ever CIN | EHCP | Medical needs | | |
| | | | | | |
| Support | Family Support | Early Help | CAMHS | Family Navigation | Young Carer |
| | | | | | |
| Action Taken | Vulnerable Pupil Hot Clinic | Education Placement Panel | Rapid Response Group | Penalty Notices | Court legal action |
| | | | | | |

What is the attendance concern?

Interventions taken (meetings, referrals etc)

| Date | Description | Action taken/by whom |
|------|-------------|----------------------|
| | | |

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Attendance Action Plan

| Action | Who/What | Timescale | Impact/Evidence |
|--------|----------|-----------|-----------------|
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| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Review date: | |
| Signed: | Child: |
| Date: | |