



# **Attendance Policy**

**Next review date: Dec 2026**

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**Date reviewed: Dec 2025**

***Empowerment | Equality | Empathy | Excellence***

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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 (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.

# 1. 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](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 2. School procedures

### 2.1 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made electronically.

Students must arrive in school by 8.35am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Students must arrive in school by 9:00am every Thursday.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.35am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and will be kept open until 9.00am.

On Thursday the register for the first session will be taken at 9:00am and will be kept open until 9:25 am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 2.25pm and will be kept open until 2.50pm.

### 2.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents and carers are requested to either email [attendance@nhsg.org.uk](mailto:attendance@nhsg.org.uk) or call the school's main number on 0208 679 0062 and select the option for reporting a student absence EXT 384. Emails from students will not be accepted.

Absence due to physical or mental illness will be 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 parents 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 will be notified of this. Persistent and or repeated absence due to medical reasons will also be required to be supported by medical evidence.

### 2.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences together with proof by way of an appointment card/text, letter or similar.

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

Parents should notify us of a planned absence for a medical or dental appointment by calling or emailing the Attendance team using the following:

- Contact telephone number: 0208 679 0062 ext 384
- Contact email address: [attendance@nhsg.org.uk](mailto:attendance@nhsg.org.uk)

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### 2.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L).

A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U). This code is an unauthorised mark on the register and will impact overall attendance.

Students who are late may be required to complete a detention on the same day or thereafter. Parents will be notified of any recorded lateness to school. Repeated lateness to school may result in students being placed on a punctuality report or parental meetings taken place to discuss punctuality.

### 2.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

## 2.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance and punctuality will be reported to parents via school reports issued as follows:

Key Stage 3 – December, March and July

Year 10 – December, March and July

Year 11 – November, January and March

Year 12 – December, February and July

Year 13 – September, December February and March

## 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision

Absences will not be authorised for term-time holidays.

When unauthorised absences are identified, the Attendance team, Pastoral leader, and Heads of Year will work with families, and in some cases may refer to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) to help & assist improving attendance.

This will include:

- Ongoing monitoring of attendance
- Telephone calls to parents/carers
- Attendance letters sent home to Parents and Carers
- Attendance reports being regularly sent home

- Meetings with the parents and child
- Home visits
- Involvement of external agencies incl EWO

Study leave – study leave is not granted by default, and is only granted to students in year 11, 12 and 13.

Provision will still be made available for students who need to revise in school.

Flexible schooling requests – on occasion, there may arise a situation whereby a student requires some flexibility in their timetable. All requests for considering a flexible schooling model should be sent to the relevant Head of Year in the first instance.

#### 4.2 Legal sanctions

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), can apply to local authorities to issue a penalty notice fine for lateness and unauthorised absences from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

For a **first referral**. If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £160 per parent per child within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to proceed with a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices.

This may take into account:

- A 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 student 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

There would be no reduction for a **second referral** within a three-year period.

**Third referral** - Within 3 years of the first offence. The third time an offence is committed for unauthorised term time absence (holiday/leave of absence) or unauthorised absence a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Fines can be around £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found to be guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show as a criminal record and also on the parent's future DBS certificates due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

## 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

## 5.Strategies for promoting attendance

At Norbury High School for Girls, we recognise and celebrate the good attendance of the majority of our students through:

- Letters home
- Name checks in year group assemblies
- Certificates awarded at the end of each term
- Small prizes awarded in assemblies

We also work with parents and carers to support them to ensure their child attends regularly.

We do this by:

- Having dedicated staff identified to support with attendance (Pastoral Leaders, heads of years, LAC And Family Liaison Worker, Attendance team and Educational Welfare Officer)
- Communicating with home if attendance begins to fall
- Acknowledging positive improvements

## 6 Attendance monitoring

### The attendance officer 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.

### 6.1 Analysing attendance

#### The attendance officer 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

### 6.2 Using data to improve attendance

#### The attendance officer will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to Head of Year, pastoral leaders, form tutors, 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

### 6.3 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 attendance officer will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers 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

If a student's absence falls below 95% we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this and they will receive a stage one attendance letter.

If a student's absence falls below 92% we will contact the parents to arrange a meeting to discuss the reasons for this and they will also receive a stage two attendance letter.

If a student's absence falls below 90% we will contact the parents to arrange a TAS meeting and or a TAF meeting in school, they will also receive a stage three attendance letter.

If after contacting parents a student's absences continue to rise, we will refer the case to our Education Welfare Officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 90%. If a student's individual attendance rate is lower than 90%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Attendance data is collected for both the am and pm sessions as well as for each timetabled lesson. This is collected currently via a web based MIS called Arbor. The data is stored securely on the school's MIS system in accordance with GDPR legislation.

Attendance data is used internally for a number of purposes:

- To track the attendance of individual students
- To identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- To monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

### 7.1 The local governing body

The local governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Attendance data is submitted to the local governing body by year group and within this the percentage attendance for PPG students is also shown for comparison purposes to ensure equality.

### 7.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher delegates this responsibility to the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for pastoral issues and safeguarding who supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### 7.3 The Attendance Team

The Attendance team:

- Taking calls from parents/carers on a day to day basis and recording it on the school system.
- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual student level
- Benchmarks attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Provides regular attendance reports to Pastoral Leaders, Head of Year and Deputy Headteacher. Reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher
- Works with the Education Welfare Officer to tackle persistent absence.

The attendance team can be contacted via telephone on: 02086790062 ext 384 or email [attendance@nhsg.org.uk](mailto:attendance@nhsg.org.uk)

The Education Welfare Officer:

- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Home visits for attendance or safeguarding concerns
- Advises with the Pastoral Leader, Heads of Year and Deputy Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### 7.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the

correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

A Register Protocol that clearly sets out the procedures for staff taking registers also exists and can be found in Appendix 2.

#### 7.5 Admin Office/reception staff/the attendance team

Are expected to support taking calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

#### 7.6 Parents/carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8am on the first day of the absence 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 are made outside of the school day.

#### 7.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every day on time according to their timetable.
- Attend all lessons and interventions on time

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher Pastoral and Safeguarding. At every review, the policy will be shared with the local governing body.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy.
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Arbor Description	DFE Description/Explanation
/	Present (AM)	Present for school morning session
\	Present (PM)	Present for school afternoon session
B	Attending any other Approved Education Activity	Attending any other approved educational activity. Not to be used for Virtual learning
C	Other authorised circumstances	Leave absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence – regulated performance	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence – Temporary part-time timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered	Dual registered to another school
E	Suspended or excluded without alternative provision	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence as pupil on a family holiday, not agreed, or is taking days more than an agreed family holiday
I	Illness	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

J1	Leave of absence – Interview for employment or transfer to another educational institution	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Alternative provision provided by LA	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late (before registers closed)	Late arrival before the register closed
M	Medical or dental appointment	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Reason absence not yet established
O	Absence in other or unknown circumstance	Absence in other or unknown circumstance
P	Participating in sports activity	Participating in sports activity
Q	Unable to attend – lack of access arrangements	Unable to attend the school because of lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance	Religious observance
S	Study leave for public examination	Study leave for public examination
T	Traveling with parent for occupational purposes	Traveling with parent for occupational purposes
U	Late (after registers closed)	Late (after registers closed)
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience	Attending work experience
X	Not required to attend non-compulsory school age pupil	Not required to attend-non-compulsory school age pupil

Y1	Unable to attend – Transport not available	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being provided
Y2	Unable to attend – widespread travel emergency	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend – unavoidable partial closure	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
Y4	Unable to attend – unavoidable full closure	Unable to attend due to the whole schools’ site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend – criminal justice detention	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend – Public Health Guidance / Law	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend – Unavoidable other than Y1-Y6	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil not on roll	Prospective pupil not on admission requester
#	Planned whole school closure	Planned whole school closure

List of codes where a reason will be required with the attendance code:

Code	Arbor Description	DfE Description/Explanation
B	Educated off-site (not Dual-Reg)	Attending any other approved educational facility
K	Alternative provision provided by the LA	Attending education provision arrange by the local authority
Y7	Unable to attend – Unavoidable other than Y1-Y6	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Retired codes no longer in use after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Code	Arbor Description	DfE Description/Explanation
H	Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence due to agreed family holiday
J	Interview	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances- not counted in possible attendance
Y	Unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstances	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances – not counted in possible attendance



## Appendix 2: Norbury High School for Girls Registration Protocol

### Rationale:

It is a legal responsibility for the form tutor, class teacher or cover supervisor to take an accurate register in a timely fashion.

Taking a form or class register is an essential part of the running of a school and most importantly the safeguarding of its students eg. they also allow us to identify patterns when students are absent together and possible cases of truancy etc.

Registers are taken on Arbor within the first 5 minutes of every lesson and each student should be seen by the teacher. Teachers should promote students clearly answering to their name being called and raising their hand to signal their attendance.

Any child missing from your lesson (if they have been present in previous lessons) should be reported to the Attendance team and staff on walkabout duty. An email should be sent to [absentfromclass@nhsg.org.uk](mailto:absentfromclass@nhsg.org.uk) highlighting that the student has not arrived to class and requesting information as to their whereabouts.

Registers should be marked with one of 3 codes only:

/ – child is present in the room

L – child was late (please enter minutes late)

N – child is not present in the room

Registers are automatically saved on Arbor so staff should check carefully that the marks entered are correct.

There are occasions when a register is either not taken or is not accurate and this can open up a range of safeguarding concerns. As a school we are committed to maintaining an accurate record of attendance and as a result we have found it necessary to set up this protocol.

### Process:

1. The Attendance team will run a report each day to check the accuracy of the registers and any that are incomplete, not taken or have errors on them will be referred to the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral & Safeguarding).
2. The Attendance team and DHT will maintain a record of these occasions and will produce the letters below and distribute these to the staff concerned, referring to the HR manager and headteacher as required.
3. Therefore, in circumstances when a register is not taken correctly, the following protocol will be followed:

- First occasion: You will receive an advisory letter as a reminder of the legal obligation to take an accurate register in a timely manner.
- Second occasion: You will receive a second advisory letter reminding you again of your legal obligation to take an accurate and timely register.
- Third occasion: You will receive an informal warning and details of the ramifications of this.
- Fourth occasion: You will be invited to attend a formal disciplinary hearing under Stage 1 of the school disciplinary policy.
- Fifth occasion: You will receive a final warning letter and will be invited to attend a formal disciplinary hearing under Stage 2 of the school disciplinary policy.

It is hoped that the outcome of this protocol will be an accurate record of student attendance and the accompanying reduction in safeguarding concerns related to absence or suspected absence.

Dear

Attendance Registers – 1<sup>st</sup> Advisory Letter

On <INSERT DATE & PERIOD HERE> there was an issue with your register.

It is your legal obligation as a member of teaching staff to take registers on time and accurately.

This is an advisory letter informing you that should you be in breach of your responsibilities subsequently it is likely to result in an informal warning.

Please ensure you complete all registers within the first 5 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins

Deputy Headteacher & DSL

Dear

Attendance Registers - 2<sup>nd</sup> Advisory Letter

On <INSERT DATE & PERIOD HERE> there was an issue with your register.

It is your legal obligation as a member of teaching staff to take registers on time and

accurately.

This is a 2nd advisory letter informing you that should you continue to be in breach of your responsibilities subsequently it is likely to result in an informal warning.

Please ensure you complete all registers accurately within the first 5 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins

Deputy Headteacher & DSL

Dear

Attendance Registers - Informal Warning

On <INSERT DATE & PERIOD HERE> there was an issue with your register.

It is your legal obligation as a member of teaching staff to take registers on time and accurately.

This letter is an informal warning of the school staff discipline policy and serves as a reminder that should you be in breach of your responsibilities subsequently it is likely to result in a disciplinary hearing with the governors.

Please ensure you complete all registers accurately within the first 5 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins

Deputy Headteacher & DSL

Dear

Attendance Registers - Formal Disciplinary Hearing

On <INSERT DATE & PERIOD HERE> there was an issue with your register.

It is your legal obligation as a member of teaching staff to take registers on time and accurately.

You have now been in breach of your responsibilities on more than 3 occasions and have a received an informal warning within the last 12 months.

You are now invited to attend a formal disciplinary hearing under stage one of the disciplinary policy. The hearing will be held on (5 working days notice) at <INSERT DATE & PERIOD HERE>.

During the meeting you will have a full opportunity to make representations before a decision is made. If a written warning, or any other formal sanction, is the outcome determined you will be offered a right of appeal

The hearing will be conducted by Markieu Hayden, Headteacher. The case will be presented by the Deputy Headteacher Pastoral and Debbi McCardie will take notes of the hearing. You are entitled to bring a colleague or a trade union representative to the meeting in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. If you wish to bring a representative, please let me know their name as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins  
Deputy Headteacher & DSL

Dear

Attendance Registers - Final Warning Letter

On <INSERT DATE & PERIOD HERE> there was an issue with your register.

It is your legal obligation as a member of teaching staff to take registers on time and accurately.

You have now been in breach of your responsibilities on more than 4 occasions and have a received a first written warning within the last 12 months.

You are now invited to attend a formal disciplinary hearing under stage two of the disciplinary policy. The hearing will be held on (5 working days notice) at <INSERT DATE & PERIOD HERE>.

During the meeting you will have a full opportunity to make representations before a decision is made. If a final written warning, or any other formal sanction, is the outcome determined you will be offered a right of appeal.

The hearing will be conducted by Markieu Hayden, Headteacher. The case will be presented by Deputy headteacher Pastoral and Debbi McCardie will take notes of the hearing.

You are entitled to bring a colleague or a trade union representative to the meeting in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure. If you wish to bring a representative, please let me know their name as soon as possible.

Please ensure you complete all registers accurately within the first 5 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely, Chloe

Rollins

Deputy Headteacher & DSL

