



Attendance Policy

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Realising potential, nurturing leaders of the future

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regard to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly (95% or higher), and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- 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.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all students are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Students must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day.
The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.45am.
The register for the second session will be taken at 2.10pm and will be kept open until 2.25pm.

3.2 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 call the school's main number on 0208 679 0062 and select the option for reporting a student absence.

Absence due to 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.

3.3 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.

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 provide proof by way of an appointment card or similar.

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

- Contact telephone number: 0208 679 0062 ext 231
- Contact email address: 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.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

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

A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Students who are late will be required to complete a detention on the same day.

3.5 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.

3.6 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 Officer will work with the Pastoral Leader, Head of Year, the Educational Welfare Officer and the family to improve attendance of the child.

This will include:

- Ongoing monitoring of attendance
- Advisory 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

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

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue 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.

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 Officer and Educational Welfare Officer)
- Communicating with home if attendance begins to fall
- Acknowledging positive improvements

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors student absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents and carers need to call the school each day the child is ill.

If a student's absence falls below 92% we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

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

The persistent absence threshold is 92%. If a student's individual attendance rate is lower than 92%, 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 SIMS in February 2022 this will move to 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 Officer

The Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Pastoral Leaders, Heads of Year and assistant headteacher.
- Works with the Education Welfare Officer to tackle persistent absence.

The Education Welfare Officer:

- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the Pastoral Leaders, Heads of Year and assistant 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 Office/reception staff

Office/reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the assistant 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 our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student 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 student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student 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 student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

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 SIMS within the first 15 minutes of every lesson and each student should be seen by the teacher. This will move to Arbor MIS in February 2022.

Any child missing from your lesson (if they have been present in previous lessons) should be reported to the Attendance Officer. A whole school email will then be sent 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 should be saved once they have been taken – please check that this has happened and if there are any IT issues please report these immediately.

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 SIMS/Arbor Manager will run a report each day to check the accuracy of the registers and any that are Incomplete, not take or have errors on them will be referred to the assistant headteacher (pastoral & safeguarding).
2. The AHT will maintain a record of these occasions and will produce the letters above 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 – 1st 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 15 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins
Assistant Headteacher & DSL

Dear

Attendance Registers - 2nd 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 15 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins
Assistant 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 15 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins
Assistant 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 Assistant 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
Assistant 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 15 minutes of a lesson, as is school procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Chloe Rollins

Assistant Headteacher & DSL

Appendix 3: Coronavirus Addendum

1. Aims and scope

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Supporting parents/carers and students who are concerned about the return to school due to coronavirus

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2021 until the end of the 2021/22 academic year. It sets out changes to our normal attendance policy, and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal attendance policy continues to apply.

We may need to amend or add to this addendum as circumstances or official guidance changes. We will communicate any changes to staff, parents and students.

2. Guidance and definitions

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance on school attendance during the 2020/21 academic year.

This addendum reflects the latest advice from the Croydon Local Authority.

In section 4.2 of this addendum, where we refer to 'close contact', this means:

- Direct close contacts: face-to-face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face-to-face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- Proximity contacts: extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

This definition is from the DfE's guidance on full reopening for schools (see number 9 in 'the system of controls').

3. Attendance expectations

It is mandatory for all students of compulsory school age to attend school unless:

- They have been granted an authorised absence by the school in line with section 4.1 of our normal attendance policy
- They cannot attend school due to specific circumstances related to coronavirus (see section 4, below)

4. Where ‘non-attendance in relation to coronavirus’ applies

We will only accept ‘non-attendance in relation to coronavirus’ in circumstances where a student’s travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19 from UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19

Examples in which ‘not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19’ could apply

In line with current legislation and guidance from the UKHSA and DHSC, examples are as follows:

4.1 Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have a positive test, should follow the guidance on [people with COVID-19 and their contacts](#). The student’s parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible. They should call the Attendance Officer on 028 679 00620 ext

Code X should be used to record where a pupil is not attending school in line with guidance while awaiting a test result.

Pupils who test positive are advised to stay at home in line with public health guidance. After a pupil tests positive for COVID-19, they should be recorded as code I (illness) whilst they are absent from school.

4.2 Pupils who have not had a test

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 should follow guidance about staying at home in [people with COVID-19 and their contacts](#). Where a pupil is unable to take a PCR test, for example due to a disability, the school should record the pupil as code X in the register.

Schools are required to follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in line with the [school attendance: guidance](#).

4.3. Student has to quarantine after travel abroad

The parent/carer must notify the school if their child has to quarantine after travel to a country that is not on the government's [exemptions list](#).

The student must quarantine for 14 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

We strongly recommend that no travel is undertaken to countries who are not included on the exemption list as the loss of learning time due to quarantine can be significant.

4.4 Student is required to shield during a local lockdown

The parent/carer will notify the school if they are advised by the government to stay at home and will provide proof of their shielding letter by sending a digital copy to attendance@nhsg.org.uk or by sending a photocopy to the school address marked for the attention of the Attendance Officer.

The student will stay at home until the shielding measures in the local area are paused. Once the shielding measures are lifted, we will contact the student's parent/carer to set the expectation that they can return to school.

4.5 Remote learning provision

If a student is not attending school because of circumstances related to coronavirus, but where the student is not ill, the school will provide the student access to remote education.

Our approach and expectations regarding remote education are set out in our Remote Learning Policy which can be found on our website.

We will keep a record of, and monitor, student engagement with remote learning, but we will not track this information in the attendance register.

5. Recording attendance

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and again in every lesson, the register for Period 5 will count as the register of the second session.

It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to 'exceptional circumstances' (as defined in section 4 of our normal attendance policy)
- Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see below for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

Student absence codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's addendum to their school attendance guidance for the 2021/22 academic year. If not covered here, our normal attendance codes apply.

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who does, and are waiting for their test results
I	Illness	Student remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness)
I	Illness	Student has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because someone they live with tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student has to quarantine (for 14 days) after a trip to a non-exempt country

X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student is required to shield in the case of a local lockdown, or lives with someone who is required to shield
X	Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)	Student is asked not to attend in the case of local lockdown

6. Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer by making initial contact and advising them of the requirement for their child to attend school in person.
- We will then instigate our normal follow up for non-attendance.
- Notify any professionals involved with the child where this applies.

If a student does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carer are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we will make contact and arrange an opportunity for the parent/carer and a member of the SLT to discuss the protective measures the school is taking to keep students safe

6.1 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue 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.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 2 months during term time by Assistant Headteacher with responsibilities for pastoral affairs and safeguarding.

At every review, it will be approved by the full local governing body.