



Believe Strive Achieve

# **Eskdale Junior School**

# **Attendance Policy**



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## 1. Introduction

Eskdale School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children who attend the school will be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

**High achievement and outcomes for pupils depends on good attendance. Children who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work, do less well in exams and can struggle socially by not mixing regularly with their peers.**

The whole school community have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play.



The school will ensure that all stakeholders know of the policy and have access to it. In addition to this the school has produced a single page summary of attendance for parents for quick reference that works alongside this policy.

## 2. 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

## 3. 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](#)

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### The governing body

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority



- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Attendance is monitored by whole school, year group and by class group by both Mr R Scruton and the link governor Mrs Kashmir Purewal. A schedule for monitoring is in place for monitoring and analysing trends in whole school, EAL, pupils with SEND, service pupils and those who are nationally recognised as vulnerable to poor attendance such as those pupils who are determined as disadvantaged.

### **The headteacher**

Mr R Scruton, headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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, and authorising Mr T Dransfield (deputy head teacher) in the absence of the headteacher
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs



- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels
- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Implementing a graduated response to challenge current and emerging issues with attendance
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing attendance reports to school staff where required
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

### **Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office the same day.

Class teacher will report attendance to parents as part of the school annual report

Class teachers are expected to raise any challenges with parents at parents evening and be aware of any graduated response to challenging poor attendance

### **School office staff**

School office staff will:

- Take all communication from parents/carers including emails, ParentMail messages, face to face conversations and telephone calls about absence on a day-to-day basis and record these on the school system SIMS
- Provide individual attendance summaries that can be shared with external agencies
- Collate attendance data on cohorts, classes, vulnerable groups and individuals for analysis alongside the headteacher

### **Parents**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult, the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person



- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Contact the school to report their child's absence at the earliest opportunity (typically this can be from 7:15am) on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when their child is expected to return to school.
- 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
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Mr R Scruton (Headteacher) who can be contacted via telephone or via email [mail@eskdale.notts.sch.uk](mailto:mail@eskdale.notts.sch.uk)
- Engage with strategies to improve attendance as part of a graduated response to addressing challenges with attendance

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time (in school for the start of the school day at 8:55am)
- Maintain attendance that should not fall lower than 95% with an understanding that the school's attendance aim for all pupils is 97%+

## **5. Recording attendance**

### **Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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, where 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### **The school day-attendance and punctuality**

The entrance to school on Ghost House Lane will open at 8:45am and will close at 8:55am. All pupils are expected to be through the school gate by 8:55am. The register will be called at 8:55am for the 1<sup>st</sup> session and at 1.05 pm for the 2<sup>nd</sup> session by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child. If a pupil is not present for the register at 8:55am they will be marked as late.

The registers will be closed at 9.10am and 1.05pm. Any pupil who arrives after the closing of the register will count as an unauthorised absence. Pupils who arrive before the register closes will be counted as present but will be dealt with under the school's procedure in managing punctuality. If a pupil arrives between 8:55am and 9:10am they are classed as late.

### **Categorising absence**

A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable.

Eskdale School recognises the clear links between attendance and pupil outcomes, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence and can potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm.

If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will therefore challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school and based on a professional judgement by the head teacher, Mr R Scruton.

### **Unplanned absence**

Parents/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible, by making contact with school via one or more of the following methods:

- Phone call: 0115 9179272 (the school phone will be answered as early as 7:15am)
- Parentmail via the Parentmail app
- Email: [office@eskdale.notts.sch.uk](mailto:office@eskdale.notts.sch.uk) or [mail@eskdale.notts.sch.uk](mailto:mail@eskdale.notts.sch.uk)
- In person at the school reception

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness (substantiated with information from medical professionals) as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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, or medical evidence cannot be provided for an absence lasting longer than 3 days, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

If no explanation about an absence is received by the school, the absence will remain unauthorised until further contact or evidence is provided by the parent.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Reasons for Absence

Acceptable	Unacceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Vomiting and Diarrhoea (48 hours absence)</li> <li>✓ High temperature (typically above 38c)</li> <li>✓ Illness with risk to others eg: chickenpox.</li> <li>✓ A death in the immediate family</li> <li>✓ Medical or dental appointments (<i>please try and ensure where possible these are taken out of school time</i>)</li> <li>✓ Participation in a special event outside of school eg: exams, representation at sport or the arts (approved at Mr Scruton’s discretion)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Feeling unwell (including sore throats, colds and minor coughs)</li> <li>X Tummy ache</li> <li>X Headache</li> <li>X Helping with family or siblings</li> <li>X School uniform in the wash</li> <li>X Over sleeping</li> <li>X Visiting friends or relatives</li> <li>X Birthdays</li> <li>X Change of teacher</li> <li>X Not wanting to come to school</li> </ul>

**Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be an authorised absence subject to the pupil’s parent notifying school in advance of the appointment, sharing a copy of any documentation relating to the appointment.

Parents should notify the school as soon as they are aware of an appointment and where possible with at least a weeks’ notice.

Parents should communicate appointments using the following channels:

- Phone call: 0115 9179272 (the school phone will be answered as early as 7:15am)
- Parentmail via the Parentmail app
- Email: [office@eskdale.notts.sch.uk](mailto:office@eskdale.notts.sch.uk) or [mail@eskdale.notts.sch.uk](mailto:mail@eskdale.notts.sch.uk)
- In person at the school reception

We encourage parents 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 and return to school where possible after the appointment.

Approved educational activity

Where a pupil is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

The pupil’s parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.



## 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

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be present for registration and on time every day.

It is very disruptive to their education, and that of others in their class, if they are late.

If a pupil is late after 9:10am, this is classed as an unauthorised absence.

Persistent lateness is defined as when a pupil has been late on 10 occasions over a 10 week rolling period.

The school office will monitor instances of lateness—these will be communicated to Mr Scruton.

Parents will be contacted by Mr Scruton to make them aware if their son or daughter has been late on more than one occasion in a week.

Where pupils are late on more than 2 occasions over a half a term period, they will be contacted by Mr Scruton to make them aware that this will be monitored and the expectation that late will reduce over this period.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office with an adult and should not be passing through the school car park without an adult.

For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises legitimately (eg for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day report to the school office.

## Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent 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 conduct a home visit or contact the police.
- 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with school may issue a notice to improve penalty notice or other legal intervention as appropriate.

If any unexplained absence reaches 10 days, procedure for **Children who are absent from Education** will be followed.



## Reporting to parents

The school reports pupil attendance to parents annually.

If attendance or punctuality is a concern, then a child's attendance and absence levels will be shared with increased frequency to establish whether levels of attendance or punctuality are improving and in-line with the school's expectation

## 6.0 Authorised and unauthorised absence

### Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or education settings.

The 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. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances-to be determined by the headteacher. Each absence request is treated individually.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, relevant background context behind the request and whether this sets a precedent for future leave of absence requests or absence.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health substantiated by a medical professional) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 5.4)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Parent(s) 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.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority



- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

### Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Engagement in the schools graduated response and its impact eg attendance contract expectations
- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks-parents will be notified when they reach 5 sessions of unauthorised absence)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who are compliant in the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

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.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

### 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

## 7. Strategies for promoting-managing/improving attendance

Parents are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil outcomes-both academically and personally. Eskdale Junior School is committed to supporting parents and pupils in sustaining and improving attendance and the following measures are used to ensure policy and procedure can be applied fairly and consistently:

- Having in place an Attendance Policy that staff, pupils and parent/carers are familiar with
- Promotion of the importance and legal requirements of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- Following the Pupil Registration Regulations, particularly for accurate, up to date and correct usage of coding
- Robust systems for monitoring attendance and data to analyse absence patterns
- Setting of trigger point/thresholds
- Early intervention and a clear understanding of who does what and when
- Clear and timely communication with parent/carers concerns and expectations about attendance by
  - Phone calls
  - Letters
  - Meetings in school or other venues
  - Home visits
- Identifying the causes for absence from pupils and parent's point of view.
- Setting realistic targets and plans to support improved attendance as part of a graduated response
- Supporting the most vulnerable pupils by:
  - referral/signposting to other agencies,
  - encouraging the return of pupils with catch up opportunities and reintegration plans
- Recording all actions in Attendance Case Files.
- Sending formal letters to parent/carers.
- Formulation of an attendance contract
- Pastoral support offered-ELSA or Take Care Club
- Evidence of Reasonable Adjustments/Support offer by school/Removing barriers
- Attendance panel meeting
- Parenting contract

## 8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

### Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Where pupils present with complex barriers to attendance, school will look to work with families, identifying one or more (but not limited to) the following strategies for removing in-school barriers.



- Presenting the school's core offer of Take Care Club or ELSA sessions to address the root challenges relating to complex barriers
- Consider alternative arrangements for arrival to school
- Consider part-time timetable
- Consult Pathway to Provision for services available at Level 2
- Attendance contracts for pupils and/or parents

### **Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND**

Where pupils are absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their SEND school may look to work with families in one or more of the following ways to support good or improved attendance:

- Presenting the school's core offer of Take Care Club or ELSA sessions to address the root challenges relating to complex barriers
- Consider alternative arrangements for arrival at school
- Consideration of a part-time timetable
- Consult Pathway to Provision for services available at Level 2
- Work with the school's SENDco

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 related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

### **Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

School will look to support pupils back into school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence through one or more (but not limited to) the following:

- Consider alternative arrangements for arrival to school
- Consider part-time timetable
- Consult Pathway to Provision for services available at Level 2
- Identify home-learning that can be completed to ensure catch-up

## **9. Attendance monitoring**

### **Monitoring attendance**

Mr Scruton (Headteacher/Senior DSL) will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) at key points across the school (this is typically every 5 weeks or at a half term) and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. Data will be utilised from the Dfe VYED to support this analysis.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing body.

### **Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns



## Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

## 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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, to understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

## 11. Celebrating Attendance

- Each term, we recognise those pupils who have achieved 100% attendance with a certificate. Certificates are given to pupils for the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms
- At the end of each year pupils are awarded with a badge if they have secured 100% attendance across the whole of the school year
- Attendance values are frequently shared with parents/carers via newsletter, thanking parents for their support in maintaining high standards



## 12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and annually by Mr R Scruton (Head teacher) At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

## 13. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying 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>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
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
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
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



<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	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
<b>Y1</b>	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
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	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



<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	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
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

**Last reviewed: Autumn 25**

**Next review: Autumn 26**



Appendix 2:

## Eskdale Junior School Protocol for Lateness

The school gate will open at 8:45am and will close at 8:55am every morning.

**Mr Scruton/Mr Dransfield will lock the gate at 8:55am (the start of the school day)**

**'Late' is defined as arriving at school between 8:55am and 9:10am therefore without a mark in the class register**

### Operational (day to day)

-the school gate opens at 8:45am.

-the school gate shuts at 8:55am-this is the start of the school day.

-pupils are expected to be on the school yard before 8:55am to be able to line up with their class.

In the event that a pupil is late, they will need to report to the school office and the following protocol should be adhered to...

- A late pupil will report to the school office. Mrs Clowes will acknowledge they are present in school and note the time of arrival on SIMs and mark them late in the register.
- Pupils arriving after 8:55am but before 9:10am on 3 occasions in a typical week will be subject to the follow protocol:
- Pupils will be given one school week to improve
- If this then persists, the parent will be invited in to school to speak to Mr Scruton face to face
- Where pupils are late on more than 2 occasions over a half a term period, they will be contacted by Mr Scruton to make them aware that this will be monitored and the expectation that late will reduce over this period

### Monitoring lateness and unauthorised lateness (any time after 9:10am)

- If a pupil arrives after 9:10am then it is recorded as an unauthorised late. Mrs Clowes will record any reasons for unauthorised late arrivals.
- Where a child has been late on 5 or more occasions within a 10 week rolling period, therefore incurring an unauthorised absence then the parents will be contacted by phone by Mr Scruton to discuss with the parent how this is becoming a barrier to their child's learning and progress. This will include a request that punctuality (and therefore no more unauthorised absence) must improve to prevent this rising to 10 late occasions. Letter 1 (Appendix 4) will be shared with parents/carers.
- At this time, Mr Scruton will invite parents into school to begin a graduated response with the intention of preventing any further unauthorised absence (as a result of unauthorised lateness)
- At 10 late occasions, parents will receive a letter from Mr Scruton informing them that a request to issue a penalty notice has been made as result of the increase to 10 occasion of lateness



Appendix 3

Eskdale Junior School  
**Protocol for Absence**

Operational (day to day)

In the event that a pupil is not present before 9:10am the following protocol should be adhered to...

- 8:55am (or as soon as pupils are in class) Staff to complete the school register on SIMs to clarify the absence.
- 9:10am: Mrs Clowes will check all attendance on SIMs and contact parents to enquire as to the nature of any absence (illness etc..) if a parent/carer has not contacted the school by this time.
- All absences to be recorded in on SIMS and where required, a professional judgement comment made by teacher or Mrs Clowes as to the validity of the absence

Monitoring absence and identification of **persistent authorised absence**

- Authorised absence monitoring will be every half term by Mrs Clowes and Mr Scruton establishing any pupil attendance falling below 95%. This will be identified as a cause for concern and will prompt action.
- Where a child's attendance falls below 95% the parents will be contacted at the end of the half term by Mr Scruton to make them aware of the absence rate, enquire about any barriers to attendance and a request that attendance must improve. This dialogue will be recorded. Letter 1 will be shared with a copy of the current attendance summary. A period of monitoring over 10 weeks will begin.
- If there are still concerns after a further 10 week period (attendance remains below 95%), contact will be made by Mr Scruton. This contact will outline the pattern of absence, and summarise the last contacts, detailing the impact that the poor absence is having on their child's academic and personal development. This will include a reminder about providing evidence where appropriate to support pupil absence (eg doctors note). The parents will be invited into school to discuss this further where a copy of the current attendance will be shared. Parents will be warned that a lack of improvement in attendance (without supporting medical evidence) by the end of a further half term period will result in a sharing of attendance data with the Family Service Enforcement Lead and a prompt further investigation and a referral for a fine from the local authority. Letter 2 will be shared with parents.



Appendix 4

Letter 1

**Example letter advising parent that school are concerned about attendance**

Our Ref:

Mr and Mrs....

12 Meadow Lane

Chilwell

Notts

NG9 4QW

Dear Mr and Mrs.....

Child (DOB)

Your child XXX's attendance is a cause of concern at XX%. I am writing to bring this to your attention in order that we might work together to improve this. I enclose an attendance certificate for your information.

Should our joint efforts to improve attendance be unsuccessful the school may decide to refer for enforcement action.

Yours sincerely

Mr Scruton  
Head teacher



Appendix 5

Monitoring absence and identification of **persistent unauthorised absence**

- Ongoing monitoring identifies those pupils who have met the school's threshold for unauthorised absence which is defined as 5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence over a 10 week rolling period.
- When a pupil reaches 5 sessions of unauthorised absence Mr Scruton will contact the parent by telephone call making them aware that their child is only 5 sessions from meeting the threshold for unauthorised absence, this will be followed by a warning letter of penalty notices for unauthorised absence (Letter 2 Warning about 5 sessions missed)
- This will initiate the start of a graduated response to support with attendance which begins after notification of 5 sessions of unauthorised absence.
- The following day from the date on this letter is the first day of a 30 day monitoring period where unauthorised absence should not continue to reach the 5 day (10 sessions) threshold over a 10 week rolling period.
- In the event that unauthorised absence continues to rise and meets the 5 day (10 sessions) threshold then Mr Scruton will request a penalty notice to be issued and a letter will be sent to the parent informing them that a request has been made to the local authority to issue a penalty notice as a result of persistent unauthorised absence.



## Appendix 6

### Leave of absence requests

- On receipt of a leave of absence request from a parent and accompanying evidence if provided, Mr Scruton will deem the absence to be 'exceptional' or not. A consideration of the following will be part of the decision-making process.

\*the nature of the event for which the leave is sought

\*the frequency of the request

\*whether the parent gave advanced notice

\*the pupil's attainment, progress and impact on learning

\* whether this will set a precedent for future requests

It must be stressed that these are considerations and NOT criteria that if met, deem a request for leave of absence to be determined as 'exceptional', therefore authorised.

- The request will be unauthorised or authorised
- If unauthorised, the return slip on the form will be returned with an attached copy of Letter 5, this will inform parents, that unauthorised leave of 5 days (10 sessions) or more over a 10 week rolling period can lead to a penalty notice fine of up to £160 per parent, per pupil being issued and this will be requested from the LA if the pupil is removed for the period stated on the leave of absence request.
- If the pupil IS removed from school for the period requested, then on return to school the Letter 6 is sent to the parent informing them that a request to issue a penalty notice has been made as result of their actions.
- On the same day that this letter is sent Letter 4 is sent to the LA requesting a penalty notice to be issued.



Appendix 7  
Letter 2

**Example letter warning of Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence-sent to parent/caers when pupil meets 5 unauthorised absences**

5 April 2023  
Mr XXX & Ms XXX  
XXX Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

**PENALTY NOTICE WARNING**

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

The registers at Eskdale junior show that, to date, your child has missed 2.5 days (5 sessions) of school due to unauthorised absences over the last X weeks.

To mitigate against any further unauthorised absence Mr Scruton would like to invite you in to a meeting to discuss the absence and begin a graduated response to ensure that attendance begins to improve.

You, as parent, have legal responsibility under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. As such unless your child's attendance improves you will be referred to the local authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for (child's name) over a 3-year rolling period.

Should your child (Insert name) any further absence which result in them having 5 days (10 sessions) over a 10-week rolling period we will request that the local authority issue a penalty notice of up to £160 for each child who is absent. The notice can be issued to both parents/carers for each child whose absence meets the Penalty Notice threshold. Please take immediate steps to ensure your child gets to school on time every day and obtain medical evidence if he/she is too ill to attend. Any other reason for absence should be discussed with the school and it is the school's decision whether to authorise any absence that is not covered by medical evidence.

Yours sincerely

Mr Scruton

Headteacher



Appendix 8

Letter 3

Example letter advising parent that school have requested Penalty Notice to be issued for unauthorised absence threshold being met at 10 sessions/5 days

Our Ref:

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx  
XX Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr xxxxxl & Ms xxxxxx

**Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)**

Further to our letter dated (Insert Date) notifying you that your child had incurred 5 session (2.5 days) unauthorised absence from school and that any further absence may result in a request to the Local authority to issue a Penalty Notice fine.

We are now writing to advise you that because your child (insert name) has had unauthorised absences of 5 days over a 10-week period a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to you for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly. Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Scruton  
Headteacher



Appendix 9

Letter 4

Our Ref:

Family Service  
Home Brewery Building  
Sir John Robinson Way  
Arnold  
Nottingham  
NG5 6DA

**For the Attention of Enforcement Lead**

Dear.....

**Penalty Notice Request – Eskdale Junior School**

I am requesting that Mr xxxxxxxx and Ms xxxxxx are issued with a Penalty Notice for failure to ensure that xxxx(child) (date of birth xx/xx/xx) attends school regularly.

I enclose a copy of the letters sent to Mr xxxxxxxx and Ms xxxxxx, a copy of child's attendance certificate, showing the unauthorised absences and a copy of the case notes.  
I look forward to hearing how the case has progressed.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Scruton

Head Teacher



Appendix 10  
Letter 5

**Example letter warning of Penalty Notice for Leave of absence taken in term time**

5 April 2023  
Mr XXX & Ms XXX  
XXX Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX  
**PENALTY NOTICE WARNING**

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

I note your application to take ..... out of education for .... days to go on holiday. Schools are only allowed to agree a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. I have considered your application and do not feel it meets the exceptional circumstances criteria and therefore your request has been declined. Should you decide to remove your child from school on the dates indicated in your application then their absence will be marked in the register as unauthorised.

An unauthorised leave of absence of 5 days/10 sessions (over a 10-week rolling period) for the purpose of a family holiday can lead to you being issued with a penalty notice fine of up to £160 for each child who is absent. The fines can be issued to both parents for each child.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for (child's name) over a 3-year rolling period.

If you do remove ..... from school for the period stated in your application I will request that the local authority issues a penalty notice.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Scruton  
Headteacher



Appendix 11

Letter 6

**Example letter advising parent that school have requested Penalty Notice to be issued for leave of absence in term time.**

Our Ref:

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx

XX Meadow Lane

Nottingham

NG7 5HP

Dear Mr xxxxxl & Ms xxxxxx

**Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)**

On (Date) we wrote to you to explain that the .....Academy would not authorise.....(child name) absence from school for ..... days for a holiday. We also informed you that this could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued to you.

I am now writing to advise you that a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for (child's name) over a 3-year rolling period.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Scruton

Headteacher



Appendix 12

Letter 7

**Example letter advising parent that school are referring for enforcement only**

Our Ref:

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx

XX Meadow Lane

Nottingham

NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX and Ms XXX

Unfortunately since our recent contact with you sharing concern around XXXX's school attendance there has been no improvement. As you do not consent to support to improve XXXX's attendance the school have made a referral for enforcement action to the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Scruton  
Headteacher