Attendance Policy

Updated for July 2026 guidance

Approved by:	Melanie Entwistle **Date:** 01/09/22
Last reviewed on:	1/12/22 1/12/23 19/08/2024 19/08/25 19/8/26
Next review due by:	19/08/27

Contents

1. Aims

2. Legislation and guidance

3. Roles and responsibilities

4. Recording attendance

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8. Attendance monitoring

9. Monitoring arrangements

10. Links with other policies

Appendix 1 Attendance codes

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) Working together to improve attendance statutory guidance 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.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026), the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the safeguarding requirements of the Independent School Standards. It also takes account of Keeping children safe in education and guidance on mental health and school attendance. Requirements applying only to state-funded schools, including the national penalty-notice framework and daily DfE attendance data submission, are not presented here as duties on this independent school.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Proprietor or governing board

The proprietor or governing board, as applicable, 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 keeps accurate electronic admission and attendance registers and provides the local authority with information required by law; independent schools are not required to submit daily attendance data to the DfE
- 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 pupil 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

3.2 The headteacher

The 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
- Working with the senior attendance champion and local authority to address barriers to attendance, with safeguarding and the pupil's individual needs considered
- 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 school transport is regularly being missed, and 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

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- 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

- 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Leanne Wood and can be contacted via email leannewood@thegreens-ens.co.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 8)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher and senior attendance champion when additional support or local authority involvement is needed

The attendance officer is Leanne Wood and can be contacted via email leannewood@thegreens-ens.co.uk

3.5 Class teachers/support staff

Class teachers and support staff share attendance and welfare information promptly with the attendance officer. The attendance officer takes the morning register at 9.00am and the afternoon register at 12.00pm for all registered pupils, using the appropriate national codes.

3.6 School staff

School staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance officer where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 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 school every day on time, unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the 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 for their child are made outside of the school day
- Engage with agreed support plans for attendance and tell the school about barriers to attendance.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Leanne Wood (Assistant Head/Attendance champion), who can be contacted via phone on 0161 459 2335 or via email leannewood@thegreens-ens.co.uk

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

The attendance officer will take the electronic attendance register at 9.00am for the morning session and at 12.00pm for the afternoon session, at the same time for all registered pupils. Each pupil will be recorded using the national attendance and absence codes in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

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 starts at 9am and ends at 2.30pm.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 9.00 on each school day.
- The morning register opens at 9.00am and closes at 9.30am. The afternoon register opens at 12.00pm and closes at 12.30pm. These times apply to all registered pupils.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents should notify the school of an unplanned absence before 9.00am on the first day and on each subsequent day, or as soon as practicable, on 0161 459 2335.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

We do not routinely request medical evidence or apply an automatic number-of-days threshold. Where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about an illness, or a prolonged or repeated pattern of illness requires additional support, we may discuss proportionate evidence with the family. We accept a range of reasonable evidence and consider the pupil's health needs and adjustments.

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 in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Please send advanced notice to leannewood@thegreens-ens.co.uk

However, 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.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent 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 make a welfare check.
- 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 relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team 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 absence continues or support is not working, we will work with the local authority and relevant partners on appropriate support and safeguarding action.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The Greens-ens will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via half-termly written reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 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 settings.

The headteacher considers requests for leave during term time individually, applying the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and recording the appropriate national attendance code. Leave for a holiday is not normally granted.

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances
- A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.
- Exceptional-circumstances requests are assessed individually on their facts, the pupil's circumstances and relevant background; the school does not operate an automatic or blanket approval rule.
- Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.
- As a 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, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence and requested in writing sent to Leannewood@thegreens-ens.co.uk. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's 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
- Attending work experience
- 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

5.2 Responding to unauthorised absence

The school responds to unauthorised absence through prompt contact, assessment of barriers, support and safeguarding procedures. We may work with the local authority where attendance does not improve. This independent school does not issue absence penalty notices or notices to improve under the national framework.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The Greens ENS promotes attendance through welcoming routines, positive relationships, recognition of improvement and practical support. Any praise or recognition is applied sensitively so that pupils are not disadvantaged because of disability, medical needs or other barriers outside their control.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We work closely with our parents and carers to ensure all students needs are met according to their SEMH and SEND needs. We ensure all requirements of the (EHC) plans are met to ensure our pupils can overcome any barriers they maybe facing. At the Greens-ens we understand that our approach to supporting our pupils, needs to be flexible. We work closely with Early Help and any outside agencies that may already be involved with the pupil and family to ensure they attend school every day possible.

7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

All our pupils have an education health and care (EHC) plan. If their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of additional barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil’s needs, the school will inform the local authority.

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

After a lengthy or unavoidable absence, we agree an individual reintegration plan with the pupil, family and relevant professionals. A temporary part-time timetable may be used only in very exceptional circumstances where it is in the pupil's best interests, not to manage behaviour. It requires agreement with the parent the pupil normally lives with, clear aims within a support or health plan, regular review with pupil and family, and a proposed end date. We discuss the arrangement with the local authority when the pupil has an EHCP, make safeguarding and supervision arrangements, and record the sessions missed with the appropriate attendance code, normally C2. The aim is to restore full-time suitable education as soon as appropriate.

8. Attendance monitoring

At The Greens, we look closely and monitor our attendance data on a daily and weekly basis. We quickly identify patterns of absence and identify students who may be vulnerable or in need of welfare checks if contact isn't made with parents. Where necessary we would involve Early Help and signpost relevant agencies to help improve a pupil's attendance should patterns of absence emerge.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school.

The school provides required information to the local authority in accordance with the 2024 registration regulations. Independent schools are not required to submit daily attendance data to DfE.

We use our own attendance records and available relevant comparisons to identify patterns, review support and evaluate improvement.

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 proprietor or governing board, as applicable.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The Greens 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 (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to teachers/support staff, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the proprietor or governing board, as applicable and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) where appropriate.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place 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

8.4 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, and understand barriers to attendance
- Explain the help that is available
- Discuss the consequences of persistent or severe absence and the support available, without presenting the state-school penalty-notice framework as applicable to this school
- 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
- Escalate safeguarding concerns and work with the local authority and other partners where necessary

9. Monitoring arrangements

The headteacher reviews this policy at least annually, and whenever guidance or the school's procedures change. The proprietor or the school's actual governing body, as applicable, approves it. The school checks that contact details, register times and named responsibilities remain accurate.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1 Attendance codes

The school uses the attendance and absence codes in the current School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and chapter 8 of DfE Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026). Staff use the current guidance rather than a fixed list in this policy, so that codes and their definitions remain up to date.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a4f9ec6a6586e258d371bd0/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_2026.pdf