



Pinfold Street
Primary School



Policy for Attendance and Punctuality

Date of Policy: March 2024

Date of next review: March 2025

Date of adoption by

Governing Body: March 2023

Date of review: March 2024

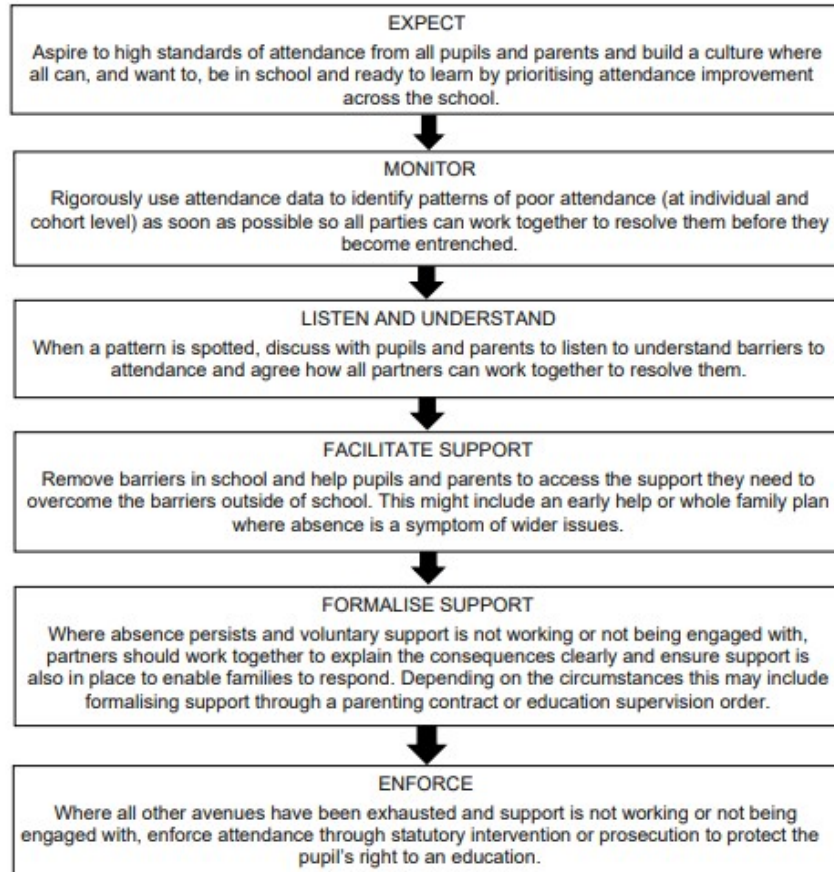
Introduction

Pinfold Street Primary School is committed to protect the rights of every pupil receiving an efficient, full-time education. The new government guidance, 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' (2022) states that improving attendance is everyone's business, therefore the purpose of this policy is to give clear information for parents, children, school staff, governors and the wider community. We expect all parties to adhere to the framework of this policy.

We expect that all children on roll at Pinfold Street Primary School attend every day when the school is open as long as they are fit and healthy to do so, failure to do so could result in formal legal action. We also expect our children to arrive to school on time. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance and punctuality is the development of positive attitudes towards school. As a school, we strive to support all of our pupils and their families regardless of their age, ability or special educational needs. Our school is a welcoming learning environment and our teaching staff are dedicated to help the children achieve to the best of their ability.

There is a strong correlation between absence and underachievement. We recognise that good punctuality is essential for a child to start the school day prepared for learning.

The new government guidance, 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' (2022) states; successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly, requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



Attendance and Punctuality Team

The promotion of excellent attendance and punctuality is the responsibility of everyone, parents/carers and school. At Pinfold, we are very lucky to have a dedicated team to ensure that attendance and punctuality is a high priority in our school.

Our attendance team consists of:

- Mrs Beech (Head Teacher)
- Mrs Wilkinson (Assistant Head – Attendance Lead)
- Miss Kennedy (Attendance Officer)
- Mrs Horne (Attendance Governor)
- Instill Excellence (Educational Welfare Officer)
- Mrs Morgan (Pastoral, parent support and punctuality lead)

Arrival and Registration

School is open from 8:45 am every morning to aid a calm start to the school day. During this period children have the opportunity to take part in a range of early morning activities including social interactions with the

adults and children within their class. The register is taken twice a day (morning and afternoon marks). A day counts as 2 attendances.

- ❖ Morning registration ends at 8:55 am. If a child arrives after the registration period he/she will be marked in as late.
- ❖ If the child arrives after 9.30 am this will become an unauthorised late and affect their overall attendance %
- ❖ The afternoon register is taken at 1.00 pm for Reception, Y1 and Y2 and 1.30 pm for Y3 – Y6. Our school day ends at 3.15 pm for Reception and 3:20 pm for everyone else.

It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside normal hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in/out system in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

Illness

The school office should be informed during the morning of the first day of a child's absence due to illness and then each morning, if appropriate, for the duration of the absence. We will not accept the reason for absence as 'poorly' or 'sick', we will require more specific details of the illness/sickness.

You can report a child's absence by ringing the school office and speaking to a member of the office, you can leave a message on the absence line or you can email the school using info@pifold-st.walsall.sch.uk

If your child has been absent for more than 3 days our attendance team will do a keeping in touch visit to see if we can help support you or your child in any way. You may also be asked to provide medical evidence for your child's absence.

Medical Appointments

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside of school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should return to school directly after the appointment and evidence of the medical appointment must be provided.

Mental Health

At Pifold Street Primary School, we take the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils very seriously. We offer a calm, safe and supportive environment and work hard to ensure the pupils feel that they belong through establishing positive, trusting relationships with children) where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. We believe this is the foundation for securing good attendance.

In addition to our whole school wellbeing approach, we offer a variety of group and individual support where needed. We encourage our pupils to 'use their words' to communicate feelings, worries or needs. This way we can ensure to help them as quickly as possible and breakdown any barriers that could potentially hinder good attendance.

Where parents are experiencing difficulties with their child attending school, we would encourage them to communicate this with us at the earliest point. We are happy to work with you and your child to put additional support in place where needed.

We promote mental health and wellbeing right across our school with age appropriate activities and events. We teach all of our children strategies for dealing with the day-to-day worries that they may experience and we always encourage them to talk to an adult in school. We believe that if our children go through our school feeling comfortable, communicating with the adults, this will support them with a happy journey throughout their time Pinfold Street.

During the time that children spend at our school they are encouraged to work towards earning seven different badges. Each badge represents one of our school values (responsibility, education, skills, pride, expectations, community and teamwork) Each of these values will enable our children to become happy, caring, responsible and high-achieving young people.

Definitions for absences:

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones or emails the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority to do this. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will be classed as an unauthorised absence as permission for this would not be granted.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Head of School.

Examples of Unauthorised Absence could be:

- Family birthday
- Holidays not agreed
- Shopping
- Hair cuts
- Buying shoes or uniform
- Emerging patterns of any absence until satisfactory reason has been sought

Repeated Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences remain on the child's record and will be reported to the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Attendance and punctuality are monitored by the EWO and the school. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents and guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem.

The EWO may also visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

If a child's absence falls below 90% it is class as a persistent absence (PA). This will be investigated by the EWO and school and a meeting will be called at the earliest point. To prevent children becoming a 'persistent absent' we will inform parents/carers if their child's attendance drops below 92%.

If a child is not in school for **10 consecutive days** the school will inform the EWO as this could be classed as a child missing in education (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023).

The Local Authority has the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

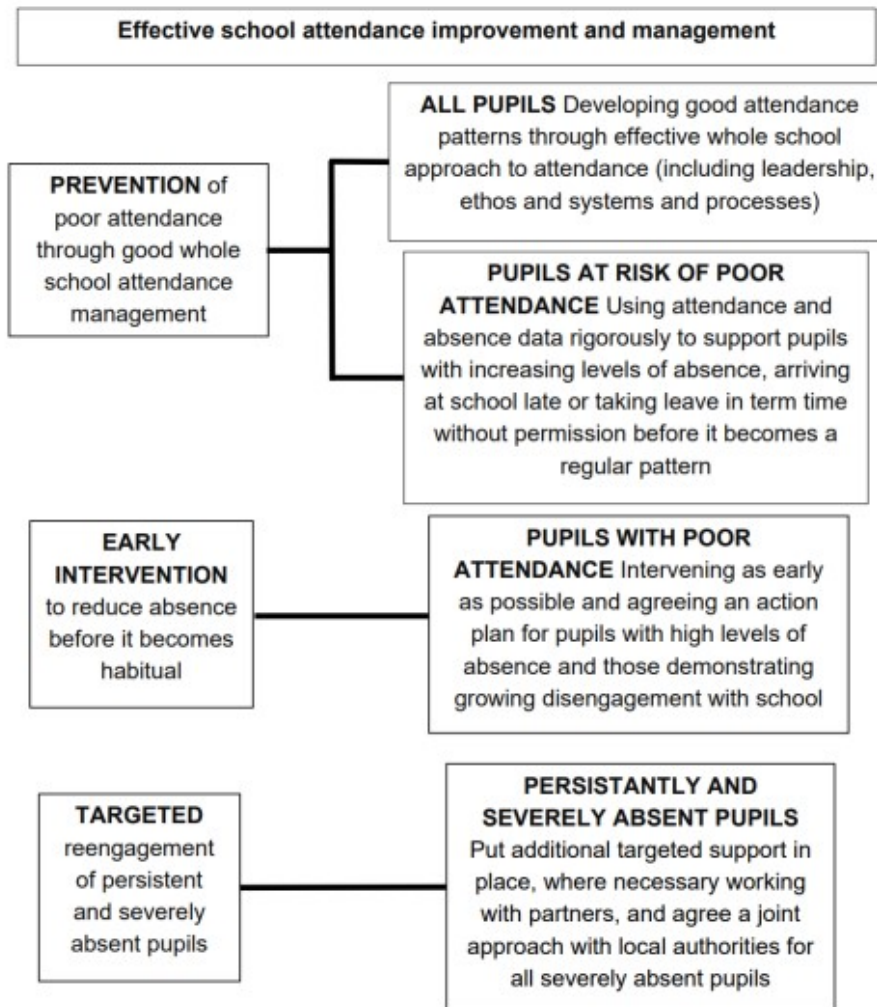
Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year). Schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils.

Severe absence is where pupils are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more, intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them. In some cases, where medical evidence is not provided, a child with an attendance of below 50% can be classed as educational neglect.

At Pinfold Street Primary School we ensure that patterns of both persistent and severe absence are a focus of our regular data monitoring and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible.

At Pinfold Street Primary School we adopt the government's guidance as set out in 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' 2020. The flow chart below captures effective school attendance improvement and management:



Our School Attendance Management Process

Daily

- All class registers will be marked accurately by class teachers either using the present code or the N code
- All daily absences will be scrutinised for reason and notification
- Reasons for absence will be screened to establish whether absence is authorised or not
- Parents will be contacted or visited when the reason for absence is not satisfactory or unknown
- Only the Attendance Officer/Lead can amend N codes based on the information gained from parents/carers and their knowledge of each child/family based on their current attendance
- Home visits by our attendance team will be made if no contact can be made via telephone
- Parents will be advised if the absence is to be recorded as unauthorised
- Pupils arriving late will be recorded as such in the register using a 'L' code if it is before 9.30am and a 'U – unauthorised' code if it is after 9.30am

Ongoing

- All absences will be scrutinised for identification of repeat periods of absence or emerging patterns of absence

- Pupils having less than 95% and then 92% attendance will receive a warning letter issued by the Head Teacher
- Parents will be invited into school for a meeting with a member of the attendance team if no improvement is made
- Education Welfare Service will commence formal action on behalf of the Local Authority where:
 - attendance is below 90%,
 - the pupil is of compulsory school age
 - the majority of absence is unauthorised unless medical evidence can be provided
 - and parents have not responded to action taken to improve the attendance
- Discussions with children to gain their thoughts on ways in which we can help them
- Letters sent to children on trajectory to becoming Persistent Absentees
- Identification of children who need multi-agency involvement to support concerns or complexities which include absence or punctuality concerns
- Implementation of multi-agency involvement to support concerns or complexities of individual cases where there are absence or punctuality concerns.
- Identification of pupils 'at risk' of PA and referral to the Attendance Officer
- With Attendance Officer, scrutinise pupils' attendance to identify those to progress to EWO
- Ensure pupils with chronic medical conditions are well-supported
- Refresh Attendance Action Plans with the Attendance Officers to identify pupils 'at risk' of becoming PA
- Identify and monitor children who are repeatedly late for school and discuss the impact on this lateness in relation to the child's academic and social skills with parents/carers

End of Term

- Parents/carers will be advised of their child's current attendance and where this falls with the current expectations for attendance
- Full attendance reports will be presented to the governing body and analysis of individual pupils/groups of pupils
- At the end of each term we will send out your child's current attendance, reporting how well your child is doing based on the expectations below:

97 – 100% Excellent	93 – 96% Be Careful	90 – 92% Improvement Needed	Less than 90% Persistent	Around 50% Severe
✓				

Days Absent	Missed Time	Number of Missed Lessons	Attendance
1	1 day	6	99.5%
2	2 days	12	99%
3	3 days	18	98.5%
4	4 days	24	98%
5	1 week	30	97.5%
10	2 weeks	60	95%
15	3 weeks	90	92.5%
20	4 weeks	120	89.7%
25	5 weeks	150	87.5%
30	6 weeks	180	85%
35	7 weeks	210	82.5%
40	8 weeks	240	80%

Our aim is for children to be in the green box each term

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Leave of Absence

Our school operates a **zero tolerance** policy in line with the local authority. Parents need to apply for leave of absence **in writing to the Head Teacher in advance**, outlining the following:

- First date and last date of leave of absence
- Name, address and date of birth of the child
- Full names and date of birth of parents
- Names of siblings at other Walsall Schools
- Reasons for such a request
- Additional details to support leave of absence

Home School Agreement

Our school will invite parents to sign a Home School Agreement as soon as their child starts our school. This will ensure that they are informed of expectations for excellent attendance.

What our Children have said about absence

Children understand that missed time also means missed learning. For some children this is significant and it can be difficult to “catch up” afterwards. For other children, friendship groups may change during their absence and this can have an emotional impact on them when they return. Children know the school has high expectations of attendance and this is communicated through recognition boards.

Leaving school

If your child is leaving our school to start a new school, you must inform us of the new school details. This enables us to ensure that every child is in education at all times. If we are not provided with this information the child is classed as **‘missing from education’**. In this situation all cases will be referred to Walsall LA’s School Attendance Support Team.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every year, or earlier if considered necessary.

During 2023-24 the school will be working with Walsall LA and Instill Excellence to ensure the government’s ‘guidance; Working Together to Improve Attendance’ is fully adhered to.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improveschool-attendance>

Summary Table of Responsibilities for Schools, Parents and Local Authorities:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1073619/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance.pdf