



Uffington  
Church of England  
Primary School

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

June 2023

*Preparing for the Future; Living Life in all its Fullness*

## Our Vision

We are a family-orientated school where everyone is welcome, a place where we strive to provide the best possible education in a caring Christian environment; an education that allows everyone to flourish and have the confidence to make a positive contribution. We seek to develop the individual strengths of everyone within our school community, where each unique personality can be recognised and valued.

Our Christian values underpin everything we do: Thankfulness, Kindness, Forgiveness, Fairness, Friendship, Trust, Hope and Inclusion are key priorities for all pupils and adults in our school.

### 1. Aims and objectives

The Government states that an attendance rate of less than 95% will have a detrimental effect on a child's education. It is therefore Uffington Church of England Primary School's aim that each of our pupils should have an attendance rate as high as possible with our target for attendance being at least **97%** each academic year unless there are exceptional circumstances, out of the child's control, that affect their attendance at school. If a pupil's attendance looks as if it might fall below **95%** by the end of the academic year, the school will support the child and their family to ensure that their attendance rate is as high as it can possibly be, working in partnership with external agencies to provide support where necessary.

### 2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) Working Together to Improve Attendance
- DfE (2015) Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England
- DfE (2022) Keeping Children Safe in Education
- DfE (2016) Children Missing Education
- DfE (2022) Working Together to Improve School Attendance

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Missing Children and Abscondment Policy
- SEND Policy
- Managing Medical Conditions in School Policy

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- Equality and Diversity Policy

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Governing Body is responsible for:**

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it
- Ensuring school staff receive training on attendance as appropriate to their role
- Ensuring that this policy does not discriminate on any grounds in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Handling any complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedure
- Having regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the well-being of children

#### **The Headteacher is responsible for:**

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
- Monitoring of attendance data and patterns and ensuring communication with parents effectively address concerns
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and intervening as early as possible to address patterns of absence
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they are being educated from home; have an authorised medical note; or have been permanently excluded

#### **Staff are responsible for:**

- Following this policy
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently
- Modelling good attendance behaviour
- Raise concerns they have in relation to a child's attendance with the Headteacher informing them of any absence which appears irregular, shows regular patterns, is unexplained or unauthorised.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day

### Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details and informing school if these change
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number
- Ensuring their child attends school every day and punctually ready to begin at **0845**
- Promoting good attendance with their children
- Notifying the school by **0900** whenever their child is unable to attend, giving details of the reason for the absence and the expected length of time the child will be away – this should be done by calling the school office on 01780 756236 or sending an email to [enquiries@uffingtonprimary.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@uffingtonprimary.co.uk)
- Ensuring that their child arrives well prepared for the school day
- Contacting the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's attendance in school
- Only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and doing so in advance by email to [enquiries@uffingtonprimary.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@uffingtonprimary.co.uk)
- Making efforts to book medical appointments around the school day where possible
- Accepting an invitation to meet with a school leader to construct an Attendance Support Plan and proactively engaging with the support offered to increase the attendance of children who are persistent absentees.

### 4. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

- **"Absence"** as:
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
  - Not attending school for any reason.
  - Unauthorised/authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher
- An **"authorised absence"** as:
  - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
  - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
  - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
  - An absence due to a family emergency.
- An **"unauthorised absence"** as:
  - Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
  - Truancy before or during the school day.
  - Absences which have never been properly explained.
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
  - Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
  - Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
  - Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- **"Persistent absenteeism"** as:
  - Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year **for any reason**.

## **5. Staff Training**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

## **6. Pupils at Risk of Persistent Absence**

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary.

The Headteacher will:

- Establish a range of interventions to address barriers to attendance
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
  - sending letters to parents
  - having a six-weekly attendance review, or more frequently where deemed necessary
  - using fixed penalty notices

Where a pupil at risk of persistent absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities e.g. Children's Services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

Where a pupil becomes at risk of persistent absence, the school will:

- Welcome pupils back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning
- Meet with pupils and parents/carers to discuss patterns of absence barriers to attendance and any other problems they may be having
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups

The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups including:

- Children in need
- Looked After Children / Post Looked After Children

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- Pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals
- Pupils with English as an Additional Language
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

## **7. Children at Risk of Missing Education**

Schools and their governing bodies must have regard to the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school-registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

## **8. Admission and Attendance Registers**

The law requires that all schools have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both.

### **8.1 The Admission Register**

The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the last school attended. Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupils will attend the school.

Schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held with the admission register about the pupil.

Where the parent/carer of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address, school must record in the admission register: (a) the full name of the parent/carer with whom the pupil will live; (b) the new address; and (c) the date from it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the name of the other school, and (b) the date of when the pupil first attended, or is due to start attending, that school.

On receipt of written notification to home educate, the school must inform the local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record.

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

## **8.2. The Attendance Register**

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. Attendance is then recorded on the school's management information system. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent (authorised or unauthorised)
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way.

## **9. Absence Procedures**

Parents/carers are required to contact the school office via email/telephone/in person by **09:00** on the first day of their child's absence. 01780 756236 or [enquiries@uffingtonprimary.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@uffingtonprimary.co.uk)

Parents/carers are required to continue to inform school on **each day** of their child's absence if this exceeds more than one day, with the exception of sickness/diarrhoea which requires an absence of forty-eight hours from the last bout of illness.

### **9.1 Responding to Non-attendance**

#### First day of absence

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A telephone call will be made by **09:30** to the parent/carer of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's system

Where there are concerns about a child's welfare, a home visit may be conducted.

#### Second day of absence

Further efforts will be made to contact parents / carers, or any other registered contacts. Again, a home visit may be conducted.

#### Third day of absence

On a case by case basis, the following actions may be taken:

- Contact the LCC Children Missing in Education Team
- Conduct a 'Safe and Well' home visit
- Contact Customer Services at the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and make a safeguarding referral

9.2. If any pupil is absent for a period of 10 days (particularly when we have had no contact from parents/carers) the absence will be unauthorised and notified to Lincolnshire County Council's Pupils Not Attending Regularly (PNAR) service.

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-attendance/pupil-attendance/3>

9.3. If a child is absent for a period of consecutive 20 days without authorisation, the child will be removed from the school register if the school and local authority have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

### **10. Monitoring Attendance**

Attendance will be monitored by the school at the end of each half term, and more frequently if there are significant concerns about levels of absence. If a pupil's attendance falls below **90%** for any reason (including illness or holidays), they will be classed as Persistent Absentees (PA). A letter will be sent to parents to make them aware of this. If attendance does not improve within two weeks of a school notifying parents of poor attendance, they will be asked to attend a meeting to discuss the child's absence. This meeting will include the appropriate staff and parent/carer and will aim to identify and solve any problems that are preventing the pupil from attending school. Parent/carers are obliged to attend.

The case will continue to be monitored and if there is no improvement, a penalty warning letter will be issued. Failure to improve attendance will result in a Penalty Fine from the Local Authority under Section 444(b) of the Education Act 1996. If it is felt that the pupil's attendance is not improving due to lack of support or engagement with either the

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parent/carer or the pupil, consideration will be taken as to submitting a file to the Local Authority to initiate proceedings before a Magistrates Court.

### **11. Reintegration**

The return to school for a pupil after long-term absence requires planning. Designated staff will be responsible for deciding on a programme for return and for the management of that programme. Programmes will be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in class as appropriate. Programmes will be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

### **12. Lateness**

12.1. The school regards punctuality as of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated. Pupils should be in their classroom at the start of the school day at **08:45**.

Children arriving at school after **0900** will be marked as late. Children arriving after **0925** with no specific reason will receive an unauthorised absence mark.

12.2. In the event that a child fails to attend punctually on **ten** or more occasions, a letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting that they attend a meeting in school to discuss the matter further and to offer support as necessary. Failure to improve punctuality could lead to further action being taken.

### **13. Leave during Term Time**

Only the headteacher has the authority to authorise an absence and will only be allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

Applications in writing should be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave. It is at the headteacher's discretion to determine whether the absence will be authorised or not. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents will be considered.

### **14. Family Holidays**

Parents/carers should not take pupils on holiday during the school term. If the parent/carer takes the child on holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and this will be referred to Lincolnshire County Council and will result in a Fixed Penalty Fine under Section 444(b) of the Education Act 1996.

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/fixed-penalty-notices-code-conduct/2>

Where a pupil was removed from school for a holiday during the previous academic year, and then is absent due to a holiday in the current year, the case may be automatically be referred to Lincolnshire County Council for a Fixed Penalty fine.

Where a pupil fails to return within ten school days of a previously notified date, the school has the power to remove the child from the school roll and report them to Children Missing Education at Lincolnshire County Council.

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## **15. Appointments**

As far as possible, parents are encouraged to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, the school office must be informed by either email or telephone.

If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office, and signed in again on return. Pupils will be expected to attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## **16. Religious Observances**

Parents will be required to inform school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

## **17. Modelling, Sport and other Performances/Activities**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain permission in writing from the headteacher who authorises the school's absence.

*Please refer to Appendices for further information.*

## **18. Young carers**

The school understands the difficulties that face young carers, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as through their time at the school. A caring and flexible approach will be taken to the needs of the young carer and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

## **19. Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Health-related Absence**

19.1. The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

19.2. In line with the school's policies on SEND and Managing Medical Conditions in School Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or Individual Plans that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

19.3. Where the school has concerns that a pupils' non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any mental health issues. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

19.4 If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.

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- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
  - Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.
- 19.5 The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.
- 19.6 To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:
- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
  - Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
  - Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
  - Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
  - Using an internal or external specialist.
  - Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
  - Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
  - Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
  - Temporary late starts or early finishes.
  - Phased returns to school following a long absence.
  - Small group work or one-to-one lessons.
  - Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **20. Encouraging good attendance**

Attendance will be encouraged in the following ways:

- accurate completion of the registers within 20 minutes (maximum) of the start of a morning and afternoon session
- identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3 by sharing relevant information with the destination school
- establishing a mechanism for working with those parents/carers who express a concern that their child is experiencing difficulty in attending school
- use of year group, class, identified groups (for example, pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)) and pupil level attendance data to enable analysis and a timely response by the school

## **21. Reporting to Parents and Carers**

The individual end of year academic report will include annual attendance data with explanatory notes, including a link to this policy. Parents and carers will be asked to contact the school if they wish to discuss the attendance report.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1



#### Definitions of Absence

|                                      |                |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Expected</b>                      | <b>100-95%</b> |
| <b>At risk of persistent absence</b> | <b>94-91%</b>  |
| <b>Persistent absence</b>            | <b>90-80%</b>  |
| <b>At risk of severe absence</b>     | <b>79-51%</b>  |
| <b>Severe absence</b>                | <b>50-0%</b>   |

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 2



## Attendance Support Plan

Name

Agreed at meeting on **INSERT DATE**

Historic Attendance data

| 2019/20 | 2020/2021 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
|         |           |         |         |

| What is going well?<br>Home/School/Medical etc | What are our main concerns?<br>Home and School | What can be done at school to<br>further support attendance? | What can be done at home to<br>further support attendance? |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |

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**Appendix 3**



**Modelling, Sport and other Performances/Activities**

1. Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s).
2. Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity/performance will request a licence from the LA.
3. The organiser will allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away.
4. The LA will only approve a licence application once it is satisfied that:
5. The pupil's education, health and wellbeing will not suffer; and
6. The conditions of the licence will be observed.
7. The LA will impose any conditions it considers necessary to ensure that the pupil is fit to take part in the performance/activity, that there will be proper provision for the pupil's wellbeing, and that the pupil's education will not suffer.
8. The school will make additional arrangements for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.
9. The organiser of the performance/activity is responsible for ensuring these arrangements are carried out.
10. The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence.
11. The above requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:
12. For not less than six hours a week; and
13. During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
14. On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
15. For not more than five hours on any such day.
16. Where the applicant is unable to specify the dates of the performance/activity, and the LA decides to grant the application, the LA will specify that the pupil can only take part in the activity for a specified number of days within a six-month period.
17. Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation is needed from the school.
18. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day.
19. The Headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent.
20. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.
21. The LA will be satisfied that arrangements for chaperones, accommodation, place of performance and rehearsal, and travel are suitable before it grants the application.
22. The LA may decide to place restrictions on any performance or activity – this can include maximum hours and breaks.

23. The maximum number of consecutive days that a child can perform is six – this applies to performances only.
24. Pupils who perform are entitled to a break of at least 14 days following the last performance where the pupil has been performing on the maximum number of consecutive days over a period of eight weeks, unless the period to which the licence applies is less than 60 days.
25. A licence is also required where a pupil will be absent from school and conducting a performance or activity abroad.
26. The LA is responsible for enforcing all licence requirements; they may carry out inspections of the premises:
27. Where rehearsals during the performance period are taking place;
28. Where performances or activities are taking place; or
29. Where the pupil is receiving their education, in order to check that licensing conditions are being met.
30. The LA has the power to amend or revoke existing licences at any time.
31. If the LA refuses to grant a licence, it will provide reasons for this decision in writing to the individual/organisation applying for the licence.
32. The organiser of the performance/activity has the right to appeal the decision to a magistrates' court, including its refusal, revocation or variation, and against any condition under which a licence is granted or an approval is given.

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|-------------|-----------|
|             |           |
| Next Review | June 2024 |