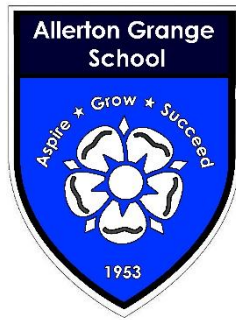


ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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Next review date November 2026

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Behaviour & Welfare*



Aspire, Grow, Succeed

At Allerton Grange we are committed to:

- Working together to achieve our full potential
- Celebrating our diverse school community and fostering tolerance and respect for all
- Developing active citizens within the school community and beyond
- Developing confident, creative and independent learners

1. Legislation and guidance

Good attendance at school is a prerequisite to pupils' attainment, wellbeing and wider development. The pupils with the highest attainment have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance Working together to improve Attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
 - The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold and is linked to our child protection and safe-guarding policy.

2. Rationale

- To ensure that every student succeeds whilst at school
 - To ensure that every student has access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school
 - To ensure that every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
 - To ensure that every student uses every school day to gain knowledge and understanding
 - To promote students' welfare and safeguarding
 - In order to achieve those goals, it is the view of school that it is essential that students are not absent from school.
- 2.1. There are 195 statutory school days per year and there are then 170 other days available for holidays which would not have a negative effect on a student's education.
- 2.2. School is of the view that taking a student on holiday in term time inevitably conveys to the student the unspoken message that school is not important.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Headteacher

The Head is responsible for:

- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping children Safe in Education 2023. [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101321/Keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023.pdf)
- Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/520212/Supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions-2015.pdf)
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and whole school attendance.
- Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Ensuring all staff are aware of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, Children's Social Work Services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.
- Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Monitoring and analysing data and trends.
- Reporting to the Governing Body and Trusts the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Open and honest communication with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area/cluster, LAs, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.

- Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

3.2 The School Senior Attendance Champion SLT

The School Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy with the Head.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Championing and improving attendance.
- Ensuring the practice that is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Oversight of data analysis -
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes, raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
- Robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group, and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
 - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
 - young carers
 - children who are eligible for free school meals
 - children who speak English as a second language
 - children who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Keeping the Head and all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.
- Compiling attendance data for the Head, the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- Ensuring a positive working relationship with the School Attendance Service is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings.
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents.
- If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Undertaking home visits in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.

3.3 Teaching staff

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date.
- Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns.
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns.
- Emphasizing with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or who are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should:
 - treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence
 - handle confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually.
- Emphasize the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom.
- Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions.
- Apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence.
- Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality.

- Review form or tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early, and help set targets.
- Periodically review practice and consistency both across and between departments.
- Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction.
- Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils.

3.4 Attendance and pastoral staff

Attendance and pastoral staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate.
- Ensuring robust day-to-day processes are in place.
- Tracking and following up absence and poor punctuality (implement punctuality routines such as late gate or sign in procedures).
- Providing appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice.
- Carrying out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable children including children with a social worker. If absence continues without explanation, further contact should be made to ensure safeguarding.
- Identifying any absences that are not explained for each session and contacting parents to understand why, and when the pupil will return to school.
- Where absences are recorded as unexplained in the attendance inputting the correct code as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 school days after the session.
- Keeping parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning).
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and making the necessary referrals.
- Undertaking home visits in line with safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying and, where possible, mitigating potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies.
- Implementing children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate.
- Where pupils have additional vulnerabilities, which may require multi-agency meetings trying to arrange those meetings outside of lesson time, where possible.

For pupils at risk of persistent absence

- Providing regular attendance reports to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated

safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

- Initiating and overseeing the administration of absence procedures.

This should include:

- letters home
- attendance clinics
- engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners
- working with families and the community to identify which methods of communication work best, recognising potential barriers in hard-to-reach families and finding methods that work and are understood
- consideration as to whether further interventions are required in line with the statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures
- providing regular reports to leaders on the at-risk cohort
- providing regular reports/caseloads to local authority attendance team or independent attendance organisations to raise awareness of emerging at-risk pupils

For pupils who are persistently absent

- Developing and implementing persistent absence action plans with pupils and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines.
- Identifying tailored intervention which meets the needs of the pupil.
- Leading daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and impact of support, make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Liaising with school leaders (designated safeguarding, SENDco and pastoral leads) on referrals to external agencies and multi-agency assessments.
- Coordinating and contributing to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions.
- Working in partnership with School Attendance Service and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures.
- Providing regular reports to leaders on the impact of action plans and interventions.

4. Categorisation of Absence

- 4.1. When a student is absent from school, the law categorises that as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.
- 4.2. The law states that it is for the school to determine into which category any absence fits, it is for the school to decide whether any absence is 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

5. The Need for Parental Explanation

- 5.1. All absences must be explained in communication by a parent or carer. However, this in itself does not automatically authorise the absence. Where a parent/carer anticipates in advance that his or her child will be absent then as much advance notice as possible should be given.
- 5.2. It is for the school to decide whether or not to accept the explanation offered. You may be maybe asked to provide evidence of a doctor's visit (e.g. appointment card or prescription). Absences for students with attendance below 90% will automatically be unauthorised without medical evidence.
- 5.3. Attendance below 90% is classed as persistently absent by the Department of Education and will trigger intervention by the school attendance team and if necessary further intervention from the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Team.
- 5.4. The school will identify children missing education and work to get these children back into education

6. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

6.1 Authorised absence is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (where possible routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – (Headteacher's discretion)
- Religious observance (The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong)
- Approved leave in term time where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Headteacher.
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence

6.2 Unauthorised Absence is defined as:

- Being late after the registers have closed - 'U' code
- Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping or having a haircut
- Where no explanation is offered by the parent or carer
- Where the school is not satisfied with an explanation offered
- Special occasions e.g. birthdays/weddings
- Holidays/leave in term time
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment
- Translating for family members

- Visiting sick relatives
- Exceptional term time leave longer than agreed by the Headteacher

7. Unauthorised Absences during term time

- 7.1. Parents and carers are reminded that they do not have any right or entitlement to take their child out of school for holidays.
- 7.2. The law states that even if a written application is submitted as required, authorised leave for holidays will only be granted if school considers that there are special circumstances. ***Please refer to Appendix 1 at the end of this policy***
- 7.3. It is up to school to decide what amounts to special circumstances.
- 7.4. In considering whether there are special circumstances, school will look at each case upon its own individual merits.
- 7.5. In order for school to properly consider an application, it should be made to the head in writing as soon as possible, preferably at least two weeks before the start of the proposed period of absence detailing details and reasons for absence. Retrospective requests will not be authorised.
- 7.6. Examples of circumstances which by themselves are very unlikely to be considered as special and thus leading to a grant of permission include:
 - To fit in with parental working patterns;
 - Economic reasons, such as cheap flights and/or accommodation;
 - To overlap with beginning or end of term;
 - To overlap days either side of a day of religious observance.
- 7.7. If a student has requested a holiday during term time which has been refused and the holiday is still taken (for 5 days or more), a Fixed Penalty Warning Notice will be issued by Children's Services, Leeds which could lead to a fine or further prosecution.

8. Improving Attendance

- Repeated absences will lead to detailed monitoring by the school attendance staff.
- Targets for improvement will be clear and communicated to pupil and parent or carer.
- School will organise support to remove barriers to regular attendance.
- School will organise meetings with parents or carers to review and improve attendance.
- If attendance does not improve, school will refer to the local authority for legal action.

8.1 Working with the Local Authorities School Attendance Service

- School works in partnership with the statutory School Attendance Service to devise a strategic approach to attendance through Register Checks and Targeted Support Meetings.
- The Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion (SLT) and the Attendance school staff will meet with an Attendance Improvement Officer from the School Attendance Service when required, to discuss and improve attendance for persistently absent or severely absent pupils.
- Action plans will be developed for persistently and severely absent pupils.
- If parents/carers do not proactively engage with support offered through the action plan, then formal legal intervention may be requested from the School Attendance Service.

Statutory Interventions

New regulations announced by the Department for Education in August 2024 have standardised the use of fines for unauthorised absences. Parents will face fines if their child misses five days of school without permission. The fines are £80.00 if paid within 21 days, and £160.00 if paid within 28 days.

Statutory intervention can include

- Penalty Notices
- Parenting Order
- Education Supervision Order
- Prosecution

9.Punctuality

9.1 Students should be in the building at 8.25 am every day and in their form ready to learn by 8.30 am. If they are late, the time will be recorded, and parents will be notified by text. Parents should always notify the Attendance Team via a note in their planner if they know their child is going to be late that morning because of appointments or transport problems and a late authorisation card may be issued. Students arriving late to school without prior authorisation they will be issued with a social time detention to be served the same day.

10.Deletions from the Admissions Register

- 10.1 Parents and carers are reminded that the law states that in certain prescribed circumstances, unauthorised absence from school shall result in the removal of the child's name from the school register.

10.2 At Allerton Grange School, consistent attendance is crucial not only for academic success but also for preparing students for future education, training, or employment. Under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, secondary schools are legally permitted to remove a student from the school roll in specific circumstances. These include: if a student has been absent for 20 consecutive school days without authorisation and reasonable enquiries have been made into their whereabouts (Regulation 9(1)(i)); if a parent has formally notified the school in writing that the student will be educated otherwise, such as through elective home education (Regulation 9(1)(f)); or if the student no longer normally lives a reasonable distance from the school and the school has no reasonable grounds to believe they will return (Regulation 9(1)(g)). We ask all families to maintain open communication with us and to prioritise attendance to ensure every student has the best chance to thrive.

Revised and Ratified by Governors

March 2026

Appendix 1

Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances

Guidance for Parents

The information below is designed to help parents understand how and when leave of absence in exceptional circumstances may be granted.

The decision to authorise absence is at the headteacher's discretion based on their assessment of the situation. Circumstances vary from school to school and so there can be no absolute rules on this subject.

Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Headteachers will rightly prioritise attendance. Generally, absences **will not** be granted during term time and **will only** be authorised by the headteacher in exceptional circumstances.

Penalty Notices for term time leave are issued based on information and referrals received from schools. The Local Authority cannot override the decision made by the Headteacher not to authorise the absence. If you have any reasons to believe the Penalty Notice should not have been issued, please contact the school within 10 working days. There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are exceptional circumstances?

Exceptional circumstances are one off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

I explained my exceptional circumstances to the school yet I was still issued with a PN fine. Can this be reviewed by the local authority?

No. Only the headteacher of a school can authorise any absence under exceptional circumstances. The local authority cannot override any decisions made by the headteacher.

If a request is sent to the local authority then a PN fine will be issued based on the information received.

My child's attendance record is generally good, can I still be issued a fine for short time unauthorised holiday?

Schools MUST consider a penalty notice for 10 unauthorised sessions (usually 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period of time (these sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of any unauthorised absences and can span different terms and school years).

Which parent receives the fine?

Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child (For example, if there are 3 children in a family, each parent may receive 3 separate penalty notices).

Who is fined when parents do not live together?

The situation can become complicated where parents do not live together and both wish to remove their child from school at separate times during the same academic year. Where parents are separated, if an absence request is submitted by the parent not involved with the absence, then both parents may be fined.

Who is considered to have parental responsibility?

The definition of a parent is anyone who has parental responsibility for the child and/or any adult with day-to-day care and responsibility. (**Section 576 Education Act 1996**). This will include stepparents and cohabiters, partners of older pupils if the partner is over 18 years of age and they are living together, other relatives with residency orders.

What happens if I am a self-employed worker e.g. an employee with fixed holiday dates, or on a holiday rota set by my employer?

It is advisable for parents to discuss this with their child's school prior to making any arrangements for absence during school term times. Legislation no longer allows Headteachers to authorise 10 days absence from school for a term time holiday. If you are self-employed then you are able to select when you take your annual leave.

We want to go on a trip of a lifetime and will be an educational experience for my child/ren. Could this be an authorised absence?

No, this would constitute a family holiday. Headteachers cannot authorise term time holidays, unless they accept the reason for the leave of absence is exceptional.

I have a significant number of relatives abroad and may need to spend an extended period in another country. Could this be an authorised absence?

Headteachers are bound by law to discourage families from taking trips during term time, whatever the reason given.

The Primary school authorised the absence but I received a PN fine for my secondary school aged child. Is there no consistency?

The Government has given the authority to individual headteachers to make their own decision based on the explanation provided by the parents. What is exceptional has not been defined by the government and therefore individual opinions may differ between headteachers. However, the local authority does encourage schools to work together but at the same time take into account circumstances of the individual child's needs.

Could an absence to attend a religious observance or festival be an authorised absence?

The day should be marked as authorised where there is an element of worship associated with the religious observance. The religious observance days are set apart by the religious body of the individual religion, not determined by the parents.

Attendance and Punctuality

% Attendance	Days absent	Potential risk
97-100%	0-6	You will reach your full potential
95-96.9%	7-9	Risk of Underachievement
93-94.9%	10-13	Serious Risk of Underachievement
90-92.9%	14-19	Severe Risk of Underachievement Research suggest that 17 days absence over a school year causes the loss of one GCSE grade.
Less than 90%	20+	Extreme Risk of Underachievement Risk of Court Action 90% attendance is equivalent to missing four weeks. 90% attendance is equivalent to missing one half-day every week. Continued 90% attendance over five years in school is the equivalent to missing one half of a school year.

ALLERTON GRANGE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES FLOW CHART

Parents/carers have the legal responsibility to ensure their child’s good attendance and we will ensure that we work together with other professional and agencies that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. The procedures below are following to ensure this happens. Attendance is monitored weekly by the Attendance Team overseen by the Assistant Head Teacher for Attendance

