

Attendance Policy



Approved by **F rbes**
Solicitors

A community inspiring lifelong learning.

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Position:	Safeguarding Governor
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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- 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 is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Maintained schools: Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:

- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
 - Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
 - Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
 - Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
 - Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
 - Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
 - Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
 - Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
 - Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
- The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
 - Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
 - Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
 - The Curriculum Committee will interrogate attendance trends each term

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
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the deputy headteacher/assistant headteacher to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers 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/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

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/carers 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 Miss Spreadbury and can be contacted via 01628 473551 or office@spinfieldschool.co.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- 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/deputy headteacher/assistant headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs. Gutteridge and can be contacted via 01628 473551 or office@spinfieldschool.co.uk

3.5 Class teachers

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

3.6 School office staff

School office 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 head teacher 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 every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. If the child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage, provide more than 2 emergency contact numbers, where possible.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Miss Spreadbury who can be contacted via 01628 473551 or office@spinfieldschool.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 on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present

- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

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 09.00 and ends at 15.30

Pupils must arrive in school by 09.00 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken from 08.45 and will be kept open until 09.10. The register for the second session will be taken at 13.15 and will be kept open until 13.20.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.20, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01628 473551 or office@spinfieldschool.co.uk

- Parents are able to leave a voicemail or send an email to notify the school office and class teacher – we require the office email address to be used as a minimum.
- A member of the school office team will pass on information from the voicemail or the email to the child's class teacher.

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.

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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.

To request a leave of absence, parents must complete a "Leave of Absence" form which is passed to the head teacher for consideration.

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. See 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

Spinfield will use the electronic sign in system to identify ongoing issues of lateness and the parents will be invited to meet with the head teacher to discuss solutions to implement to improve this.

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 do a home visit or call the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or 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 support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: a notice to improve

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels through termly Parent Consultations.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

- 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

Rare and unexpected circumstances which are unlikely to reoccur. Examples include:

- Medical emergencies
- Family emergencies (e.g. death of a relative)
- Family celebrations such as a wedding
- Leave for compassionate reasons, for example, travel to see an elderly relative

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, taking into account 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 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised 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 for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons 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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

- Prior to children joining our Reception class all parents/carers are sent an information pack, part of which emphasises the importance of good attendance and punctuality. This is also emphasised at the meeting to which all parents/carers are invited prior to their children joining Reception classes.
- Parents/carers of children who join our school in different year groups have individual meetings with the Head Teacher or Class Teacher where again, the importance of good attendance and punctuality are emphasised.
- Individual yearly attendance figures for children are sent to parents/carers as part of the end of year reports.
- Our Home/School Agreement emphasises the need for regular attendance and punctuality.
- Early intervention with parents/carers of children causing concern is important so that any problems can be sorted out at an early stage in order that good attendance or punctuality is not compromised.

7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

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

7.1 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.2 Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

It will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with

- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

7.4 Penalty notices

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

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

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

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

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

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

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

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

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

If the school becomes aware of barriers that relate to the pupil's needs, we will inform the local authority.

Our approach towards pupils with complex barriers to attendance:

1. Understanding the Barriers

Before taking action, it's essential to **diagnose the underlying issues**. Poor attendance is often a *symptom* of deeper challenges, such as:

- **Emotional or mental health needs** (e.g. anxiety, social difficulties)
- **Family issues** (e.g. bereavement, domestic conflict, parental ill health)
- **Practical issues** (e.g. transport, uniform, finances)
- **Negative school experiences** (e.g. bullying, academic struggles, unmet SEND needs)

Approach:

- Build trust and a safe space for open conversation.
- Use an **attendance conversation framework** (e.g. *listen, understand, empathise, problem-solve*).
- Collaborate with pastoral staff, SENCo, EWO (Education Welfare Officer), and mental health practitioners to create a full picture.
- Keep records of patterns, both qualitative (what pupils say) and quantitative (data on lateness, partial absence, etc.).

2. Working with Families

Families are key partners, most want the best for their child but may feel overwhelmed, judged, or unsupported. The goal is to **build trust and shared ownership** of solutions.

Strategies:

- **Start with empathy, not blame.** Use “We’re worried *with* you” rather than “We’re worried *about* you.”
- **Offer flexible meeting times** or home visits to remove practical barriers to communication.
- **Work with, not around, parents.** Ask what has worked before; value their insight.
- **Communicate regularly and positively.** Balance discussions about attendance with celebrations of small successes.
- **Signpost or involve external support** where needed, e.g. Early Help, social care, counselling, parenting support groups.

Example:

A weekly check-in with the parent (5 minutes by phone) celebrating progress

3. Removing In-School Barriers

Schools can unintentionally create obstacles that make attendance harder. Reflecting on the **school environment, curriculum, and relationships** is key.

Strategies:

- **Belonging and Relationships:**
Assign a key adult/mentor who greets the pupil daily. Relationship consistency is often the single most effective factor.
- **Safe Space or Gradual Reintegration:**
For anxious pupils, allow a calm space (e.g. nurture room) or flexible timetables to rebuild confidence.
- **Curriculum Relevance:**
Engage pupils through meaningful, hands-on or interest-linked learning to boost motivation.
- **Peer Support:**
Buddy systems or small-group interventions can help pupils reconnect socially.
- **Consistency Across Staff:**
Ensure every adult uses the same language and expectations about attendance — consistency builds safety.
- **Celebrate Attendance Growth, not Perfection:**
Reward improvement (e.g. 80% → 90%), not just full attendance.

4. Whole-School & Multi-Agency Framework

To sustain impact:

- **Embed attendance into wellbeing and safeguarding systems.**
- **Train staff** to recognise early signs of school anxiety and disengagement.
- **Use multi-agency plans** (e.g. Early Help Assessments) for complex cases.
- **Review progress regularly** with family and pupil input.

We use an ‘*Assess–Plan–Do–Review*’ cycle for pupils with complex attendance barriers. We begin by understanding the root causes, co-create a plan with the family, make small achievable steps (such as partial timetables, key adult support, or morning check-ins), and review progress every fortnight. The goal is not compliance but belonging.”

8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

See 8.1

8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

See 8.1

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

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

Core Principles

- **Empathy first** – understand the pupil's experience and emotions.
- **Collaboration** – with families, external professionals, and internal teams.
- **Consistency** – clear expectations paired with compassionate flexibility.
- **Belonging** – make the child feel they *belong* before worrying about attendance percentages

1. Preparation Before the Return

Aim: Ensure the return feels safe, supported, and positive rather than overwhelming.

Key actions:

- **Liaise early** with the family, pupil, and any professionals involved (medical teams, social care, etc.) to agree on a reintegration plan.
- **Gather relevant information** — the reason for absence, any ongoing needs, and what support might be required.
- **Assign a key adult** (e.g. class teacher, TA, or pastoral mentor) to be the main point of contact.
- **Plan for flexibility:** consider a **staged or part-time return** if appropriate, gradually building up attendance.
- **Prepare peers sensitively:** where appropriate, brief classmates to ensure a welcoming, non-judgmental atmosphere

2. Warm Welcome and Reconnection

Aim: Rebuild a sense of belonging and routine.

Key actions:

- **Greet the pupil personally** on their first day back and celebrate their return.
- **Re-establish relationships** — allow time for informal conversations and peer reconnection.
- **Provide a buddy system** for social support and practical help (e.g. navigating routines, catching up on work).
- **Offer a safe space or “time-out” card** so the pupil has a strategy if they feel overwhelmed.

3. Academic Reintegration

Aim: Remove barriers to learning and rebuild confidence gradually.

Key actions:

- **Assess learning gaps** through gentle, informal assessment.
- **Prioritise key skills and concepts** — avoid overwhelming catch-up expectations.
- **Offer targeted interventions or tutoring** if needed, focusing on small, achievable steps.
- **Use differentiation and scaffolding** to reduce frustration or feelings of failure.
- **Celebrate effort and progress** to rebuild self-esteem.

4. Pastoral and Emotional Support

Aim: Address emotional wellbeing as a foundation for attendance and learning.

Key actions:

- **Hold regular check-ins** (e.g. 5 minutes daily/weekly with the key adult).
- **Normalise any anxiety** about returning — reassure that it's common and support is available.
- **Access pastoral or counselling support** if needed (e.g. nurture provision, ELSA, school counsellor).
- **Involve family** in setting small attendance and wellbeing goals, celebrating every success.

5. Review and Ongoing Monitoring

Aim: Maintain consistency and ensure sustained attendance and wellbeing.

Key actions:

- **Regularly review the reintegration plan** with pupil, family, and staff — adjust as needed.

- **Track attendance and engagement** weekly to spot early signs of struggle.
- **Communicate successes** home frequently to reinforce partnership and motivation.
- **Gradually fade additional support** as the pupil regains confidence and stability.

Example Reintegration Framework

Stage	Focus	Support Strategies
Before return	Planning	Contact with family, staged plan, share info with staff
Week 1–2	Reconnection	Key adult support, safe space, peer buddy
Week 3–4	Academic catch-up	Light workload, tailored tasks, positive feedback
Ongoing	Review & sustain	Family updates, celebration of milestones, attendance tracking

8.5 Prolonged absence for children in the EYFS

Principles Underpinning Our Approach

- **Warmth and empathy:** every family's context is understood before action is taken.
- **Early intervention:** issues are addressed before absence becomes entrenched.
- **Collaboration:** families are partners in supporting attendance and wellbeing.
- **Belonging before attendance:** emotional security and positive relationships are the foundation for regular attendance.

1. Understanding the Context

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), consistent attendance is vital for children's social, emotional, and language development. However, we recognise that prolonged absence may occur for a range of reasons, including family circumstances, illness, or emotional needs. Our approach is **child-centred, proactive, and rooted in strong relationships with families**.

2. Early Identification and Communication

Aim: To respond quickly when absence becomes significant or patterns emerge.

Our actions:

- **Monitor attendance daily** and identify emerging patterns of concern.
- **Contact families promptly** (ideally on the first day of absence) to check on wellbeing and understand the reason for absence.
- **Record all communication** on attendance logs to build a clear picture of support and intervention.
- Where absence becomes prolonged (typically 10 consecutive sessions or more), we **arrange a meeting** with parents or carers to discuss the situation, explore barriers, and agree on next steps.

3. Maintaining Connection During Absence

Aim: To sustain a sense of belonging and continued development while the child is away.

Our actions:

- **Keep in touch regularly** (via phone calls, messages, or home visits where appropriate) to maintain relationships and reassure the child and family.
- **Provide optional home learning activities** such as story videos, simple play-based learning packs, or suggested activities to support language and communication.
- **Share class news or photos** through appropriate channels (with parental consent) so the child continues to feel part of the setting.

4. Planning for Return

Aim: To make the transition back into the setting positive and reassuring.

Our actions:

- **Plan a gradual reintegration** if needed — shorter sessions or part-days to build confidence.
- **Prepare the environment and key adults** to ensure a warm welcome and emotional security.
- **Talk with the child** beforehand (if possible) to remind them of familiar routines and friends.
- **Brief all relevant staff** on the child's circumstances to ensure consistency and sensitivity.

5. Supporting the Child on Return

Aim: To rebuild confidence, routine, and engagement in learning.

Our actions:

- **Assign a familiar key person** to support the child's emotional wellbeing and resettling.
- **Focus initially on relationships and play** rather than formal learning.
- **Provide reassurance and predictability** — consistent routines, visual timetables, and calm transitions.
- **Observe and assess carefully** to identify any regression or new needs that may have arisen during absence.
- **Work closely with parents** to share progress and address any ongoing barriers to attendance.

6. Working with Families and External Agencies

Aim: To ensure a coordinated response where absences are prolonged or complex.

Our actions:

- **Build trusting, non-judgemental relationships** with families.
- **Offer Early Help support** or referrals where appropriate (e.g. health visitors, family support workers, or educational welfare services).
- **Hold regular review meetings** for ongoing absences to assess progress and plan next steps.
- **Keep safeguarding at the centre** — prolonged or unexplained absence is treated as a potential safeguarding concern and acted upon in line with statutory guidance.

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection/safeguarding policy which can be found in the Google Drive and on the school website and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

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

9.2 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

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

9.4 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
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
 - Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
 - Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
 - Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)

Parents will be sent letters if their child is identified as a persistent absentee through the school census, the school has different levels of letters depending on how many times the child has been identified as a persistent absentee. If the child's attendance does not improve, parents will be invited to a meeting with the head teacher.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the head teacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- EYFS policy

Appendix 1: Procedures at Spinfield

Spinfield Registration Procedures

The gates open at 8.45 for children to enter the school premises. Spinfield lessons begin promptly at 9.00am and at 1.15pm

The registers close at 9.10am and at 1.25pm

- Registers are marked at the beginning of each half day session using SIMS
- Children who are absent or late will be noted

Arrangements for the recording of lateness

Children who arrive after the close of the register must report to the school office where they will need to be signed in by their parent/carer using the Inventory system. If there is a valid reason for lateness, e.g. doctor's appointment, this may then be authorised, but children/parents who fail to provide an adequate explanation for the lateness must be marked as an unauthorised absence for that session.

Authorised/unauthorised absence

- Parents/Carers are asked to inform our school on the first day of their children's absence by written note, verbal message or phone call. We operate a 'First Day Absence Call' system if no message has been received by 09.15 am. The primary contact will be called and if they do not answer, the member of staff will work through the list of additional contacts. If we have not made contact to find out the reason for absence a visit to the child's house would be made.
- It's important for Parents/Carers to realise that not all reasons for absence may be regarded as valid and consequently may not be authorised.

- Absence may be authorised for illness, hospital appointments, school visits/attending interviews, for religious reasons, or for unavoidable circumstances such as bereavement, moving house or serious emergency.
- Routine dentist or doctor appointments should be made, as far as possible, outside of the school day.
- Attendance is recorded in our SIMs database and monitored by the Headteacher. Any continued absence picked up by the MIS system or by the Headteacher would be reported to the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer)
- Attendance Targets are set at 97%. This is monitored and reported on each half term and letters are sent to the parents. If absence continues the EWO would be contacted and there may be a fine imposed.

Late collections procedures

Children should always be collected punctually at 3.30pm. If a child is not collected, they are taken to the school office at 3.40pm. Emergency contact numbers will be used if we are unable to contact parents/carers.

If parents/carers have an emergency that means they are going to be significantly late, school should be informed as soon as possible.

Holidays during term time

There are thirteen weeks of school holidays each year (a quarter of the year) and we firmly believe that family holidays should be taken during these times. In very exceptional circumstances a child may be entitled to two weeks holiday a year outside of these times, but this is strictly at the discretion of the Head Teacher and, as a school, we strongly discourage additional holidays as they lead to children becoming behind with their learning.

Appendix 2: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or

		Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays