



Paulerspury C.E Primary School

Attendance Policy

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Written by:	Robin Bunting
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Our policies are written with our School Values in mind. These are:

Care
Courage
Creativity
Forgiveness

Honesty
Hope
Perseverance
Respect

Responsibility
Thankfulness
Trust

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The school business manager and school administrative assistant

The school business manager and school administrative assistant :

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis and submitting this information to the school office.

3.5 School admin staff

School admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils may enter school from 8.40. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50 and will be kept open until 9.00. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.55 and will be kept open until 1.00.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

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

However, we encourage parents/carers 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/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

If a pupil arrives not more than 30 minutes after the registration period, they must report to the school office for signing into the late register. They will then be registered as 'late' for that session.

If a pupil arrives 30 minutes or more after the closure of the register, they must advise the School Office and will be entered into the lateness register. They will be registered as unauthorised absent for the session unless an appropriate explanation is received.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by telephone, email or text.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported annually as part of the annual school report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- visiting seriously ill relatives
- bereavement of a close family member for the funeral service only, not extended leave
- wedding of a close family member
- taking a child abroad for medical treatment
- important religious observances but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for one off situations rather than regular or recurring events.
- families of service personnel returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- 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 parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

School will not authorise term time holidays in the following circumstances:

- Where there is a pattern of the same holiday request year on year.
- Where there have been previous term time holiday absences of any length in the same Key Stage (for this purpose Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 count as the same Key Stage.)
- Where pupils are in Year 2 or Year 6 (national curriculum testing years)
- Where there is a retrospective request for term time holiday
- Where there is a history of poor attendance
- Where there is failure to evidence that any request is due to an exceptional circumstance.

If parents believe exceptional circumstances exist, they must explain the detailed reasons in writing to the Headteacher. A letter should be attached to the school's Leave of Absence Form (Appendix 2).

Members of the school's Governing Body may be consulted before any decision is reached. Parents must complete this procedure before making any travel arrangements.

The final decision will be given within five school days. Multiple applications within one school year will automatically be refused.

Less than 5 days absence = 98%+ attendance
14 days absence (approx.) = 93.5% attendance
20 days absence (approx.) = 90% attendance
30 days absence (approx.) = 88% attendance

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 per week.

Flexi-schooling requests

If a parent/carer requests a flexi-schooling arrangement each case will be considered separately. All parties involved, including WNC, will be consulted and any decision made will be in the best educational interests of the pupil and the school.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

Attendance is monitored by the school business manager, the school administrative assistant and the headteacher. If a child's attendance becomes a cause for concern the school will contact the parent to discuss the reasons for this. Help and support will be offered to help improve the child's attendance. A target will be set and a review date agreed. If attendance does not improve the school will send a formal attendance letter to the parent seeking a meeting to further discuss attendance. An attendance agreement will be drawn up with targets and milestones, agreed by all parties. If attendance does not improve the school will contact WNC and consider legal sanctions, outlined below.

The school strategy for following up unacceptable levels of attendance is outlined in the flowchart at appendix A.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Overall attendance levels at the school are good. Parents are supportive and recognise the importance of their children regularly attending. Staff emphasise the importance of being in school and encourage the children to attend.

7. Attendance monitoring

The school has rigorous systems in place to monitor absence and identify those pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. This will include children whose attendance falls below acceptable levels.

If a child is absent from school and no reason has been received, then the office staff will ring the child's parents to seek an explanation. If a reason is given verbally this should be confirmed in writing on the child's return to school.

If a child continues to be absent the school will contact the parents to enquire into the child's wellbeing and ascertain an expected return to school date.

If a child's overall level of attendance drops below 90% then the school will investigate further. This may be due to:

- Prolonged illness
- Ongoing medical treatment
- Criminal or court proceedings
- Illness of a close family member
- Arrangements for Looked after Children/Children in care or other changes in family circumstance
- Other circumstances defined at the time

If no acceptable reason exists for persistent absence, then the school will work with the family to set targets for improved attendance. If necessary other agencies will be involved to support the family in meeting their targets.

If persistent absence falls below 85% then the school will liaise with the Local Education Authority who may consider fines or legal proceedings.

Office staff will report monthly to the Headteacher on persistent absence and any reasons for it. The headteacher will then contact the parents of any pupils who are persistent absent without good reason.

The school collects and stores attendance data using the school management information system (Arbor). The school provides attendance data to the DFE as requires, using Arbor to send data as part of the school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

The school uses attendance data to identify whether or not there are particular pupils or groups of pupils whose absence may be a cause for concern. Where attendance is a concern the school will use data to analyse attendance by year group, class or group of pupils, for example gender or ethnicity. The school use the data to identify the main causes

of absence within the school and to take action to address and improve these areas as necessary. The school will use the data to monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

8. Monitoring arrangements

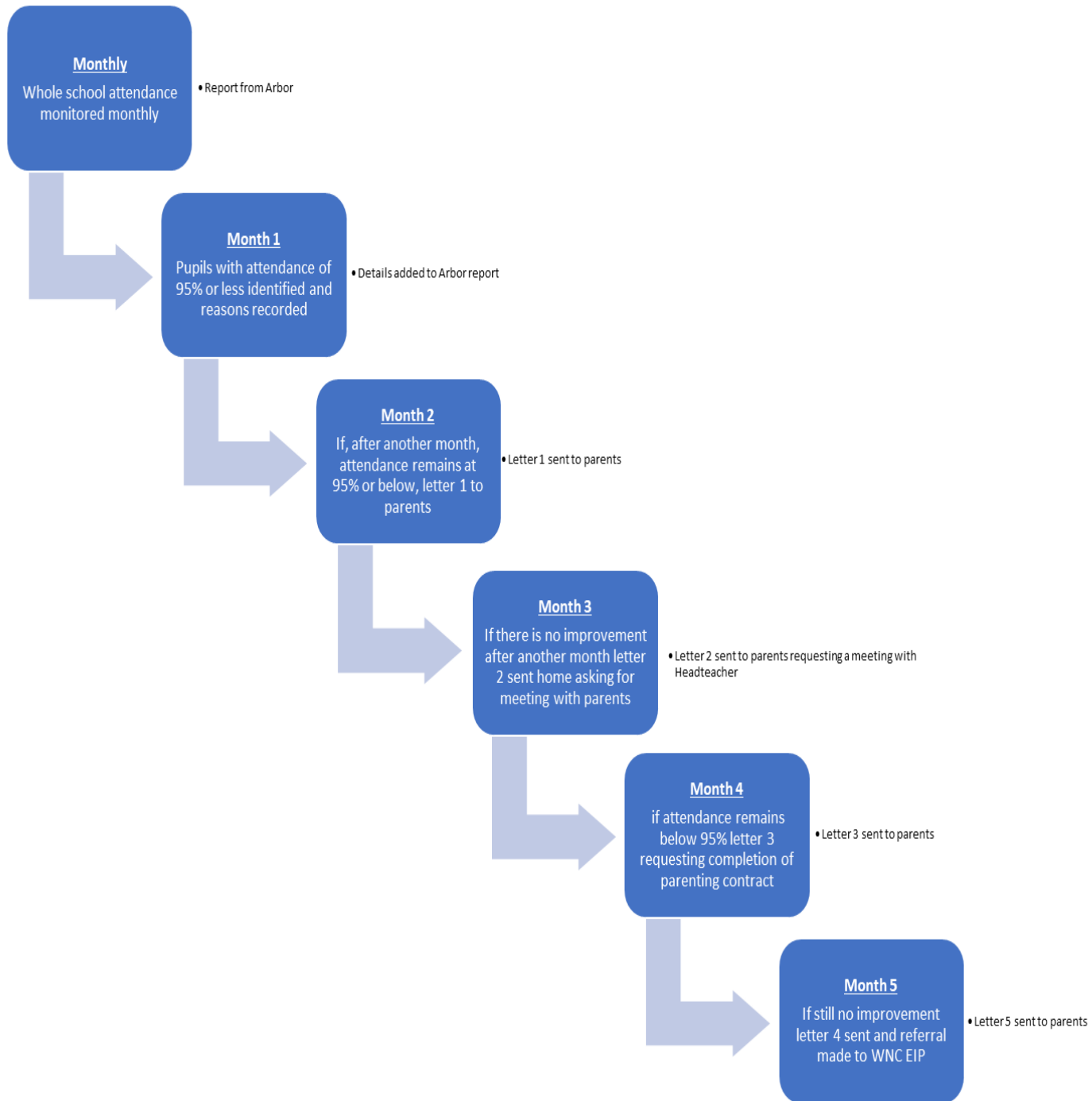
This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix A



Appendix 1: 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday

		due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to	School site is closed, there is disruption

	exceptional circumstances	to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day