

POLICY FOR PUPILS' SCHOOL ATTENDANCE



Version: September 2026

Ratified by the Governing Body

Chair of Governors - Natasha Harris

To be reviewed Annually

(September 2027 or sooner if legislation or best practice changes)

This policy has been reviewed and updated with consideration given to the principles and the ethos outlined in the UN Convention for the rights of the child - Article 28.

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

Lead Responsible

Mr. W Tulloch – Head Teacher

Version 1.0

Equal Opportunities Statement

At The Pines Special School we continuously strive to ensure that everyone in our school is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunity to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality or disability.

Safeguarding

The welfare and safety of children who attend our school is our paramount concern. We will promote the health, well-being and safety of the pupils in all we do.

We recognise that our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. We understand our responsibilities set out under section 175 of the 2002 Education Act and the latest version of the Statutory DfE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' to work together in partnership with other agencies to help children to grow up in a healthy and safe environment.

Audience

This policy is intended to be read by parents and carers in order to ensure that attendance is given a high priority.

Aims

The government National Expectation for attendance is 95% or above. At The Pines Special School we strive to be above the national average. Pupils make more progress if they are in school. Our policy aims to ensure that parents/carers help us to ensure their child makes progress by sending them to school every day on time. This policy takes into account the guidance set out by the DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance'.

Registration

The school's registration periods are from 9.15am-9.30am and 1.00pm – 1.15pm primary, 1.45pm -2.00pm secondary. It is the class teacher's legal responsibility to ensure that the registers via SIMS are completed properly at these times so that an accurate record of attendance is available during the morning and afternoon session.

Absences

If your child is absent from school due to illness, please telephone school on 0121 464 6136 and inform the office staff or leave a message ideally before 9am. If your child's illness lasts for more than one day, you must phone school daily and inform us why your child is still absent. If your child's illness lasts longer than 48hrs and you have not already done so, we advise you to seek medical attention.

Parental illness is NOT an excuse for children not attending school. Children must attend school every day unless they are ill.

Children who are “absent from education”

The following information is taken from our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

A child going missing and/or patterns of unauthorised absence, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation; child criminal exploitation; mental health problems; substance abuse and other issues. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risks and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future.

Work around attendance and children missing from education will be coordinated with safeguarding interventions. We must notify the local authority of any pupil/student who has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 5 days or more after making reasonable enquiries

The school (regardless of designation) must also notify the local authority of any pupil/student who is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the prescribed regulations outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2016 amendments.

This means that in our school we will:

- Hold three or more emergency contact numbers for each pupil
- Ensure all our attendance officer liaises closely with the DSL.
- Adapt our attendance monitoring on an individual basis to ensure the safety of each child at our school.
- Demonstrate that we have taken reasonable enquiries to ascertain the whereabouts of pupils that would be considered 'missing'.
- Work closely with the CME Team, School Admissions Service, Education Legal Intervention Team, Elective Home Education Team and Birmingham Children's Trust.

Lateness

If your child arrives at school after 9.30am, your child will be admitted by staff in the front office and will receive a late mark. Parents/carers will be asked the reason for your child's lateness. This will be logged and monitored by the Attendance Officer for improvement.

If your child arrives at school after 9.45am your child will be recorded with a U code which means Unauthorised Absence.

Safe and Well Home Visits

If your child is absent from school and you do not inform school, a member of school staff may visit your home to ask why your child is absent from school. If you are not present you will be left a letter asking you to contact school. It is very important that you contact school and inform us why your child is absent. If we do not hear from you, we will be concerned and may refer you to Children's Services.

Remember that we are here to support you to support your child's education, and will do an Early Help assessment if you are going through a difficult time and are struggling to maintain your child's attendance.

What do we mean by Early Help?

Early Help means taking action to support a child, young person or their family early in the life of a problem, as soon as it emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth to adulthood, and applies to any problem or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on their own. It also applies to all children and young people, with any form of need.

Early Help requires that agencies should work together as soon as a problem emerges or a need is identified to ensure the child gets the right response, and the right services, from the right people at the right time. Our aim is to meet need early and avoid a problem escalating or the need increasing. Early Help is provided to prevent or reduce the need for specialist interventions unless they are absolutely the correct response to meet the need and resolve the problem.

Medical Appointments

If your child has a medical appointment, before the appointment takes place please give a copy of the appointment letter or card to the office staff who will notify the class teacher. A photocopy of the document will be taken, if the appointment letter or card is not submitted; your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Leave in Term-Time

The DfE's guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance makes it clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The guidance states 'The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.' Your circumstances will only be considered if you complete a 'Leave of absence' form available from the school office. Unauthorised absence of this nature will be subject to a fine. The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Please observe these regulations. They have been re-written with the education of

your child at their heart. Should there be any exceptional circumstances, please make an appointment to discuss them with the Headteacher before making any bookings.

Notification of attendance

School uses data to identify pupils who are at risk of poor attendance. Attendance that falls below 90% categorises your child as 'Persistently Absent'. The impact of this on your child's education can be severe and long-lasting. Leaders are proactive in engaging parents to problem solve reasons and address any barriers that may lead to poor attendance. When pupils join The Pines Special School, we carefully explain the school expectation for high attendance and how we celebrate and reward good attendance. Through Early Help we can signpost and support access to any required services. We endeavour to listen to parents and understand reasons for poor attendance the barriers that families may face. Through our work with external agencies we seek to reduce and remove barriers outside of school.

If, following early intervention and support, attendance does not improve school will seek the advice and support of the Attendance Team in Birmingham and will follow Birmingham City Councils Support First Attendance procedures. These can be found at:

[Support First school attendance framework and guidance | Birmingham City Council](#)

It is parent/carer's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence.

At the end of the year you will be sent a copy of your child's Attendance Report. You may receive a report termly if we have concerns about your child's attendance and we will ask to meet to discuss any concerns.

The registration codes below represent how your child's attendance, will be recorded on their Attendance Report.

Registration Codes

Code / \	Present at the school / = morning session \ =afternoon session
Code L	Late arrival before the register is closed
Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code V	Attending an educational visit or trip
Code P	Participating in a sporting activity
Code W	Attending work experience
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Code D	Dual registered at another school
Code	C1 Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
Code M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for the admission to another educational institution
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Code T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code R	Religious observance
Code I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Code Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Code Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Code Y4 Unable to attend due to the whole school site	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Code G	Holiday not granted by the school
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established

Code	O Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Code Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
Code #	Planned whole school closure

School procedures

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis
- holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- championing and improving attendance
- 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
- arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- offering Early Help to PA families
- checking in with the attendance officer at 9:30 each day then carrying out safe and well checks as needed
- meet weekly with attendance officer weekly (or other office staff in AO absence) to discuss PA and next steps or improvements

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- reporting concerns about attendance to the Senior Attendance Champion
- reporting concerns on My Concern if a 'safe and well check' required
- making first day calls from 9:30am each day
- making daily calls if pupils are considered to be persistently absent
- Following up on absences and monitoring codes

- Ensuring all registers are completed in a timely manner

Class teachers are responsible for:

- recording attendance daily
- using the correct codes
- submitting this information to the school office in a timely manner

School Office staff are responsible for:

- taking calls from parents about absence
- acknowledging messages on the school app regarding attendance and referring them to Attendance Officer if concerned
- recording absence information from parents on the school system