



## Attendance Policy

<b>Date reviewed by School</b>	Spring 2024
<b>Date ratified by FGB</b>	30 April 2024
<b>Date for next review</b>	Spring 2025

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs they may have. **The Education Act of 1996 states that a parent/carer is responsible for ensuring their child attends regularly and punctually.** Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them.
- 1.2 There are 190 school days (380 sessions) a year which every child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 175 days (350 sessions) of school holidays.
- 1.3 At Uplands, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential. The Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that good attendance and punctuality have a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of pupils.
- 1.4 Uplands Primary School and Nursery takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment, and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.
- 1.5 Absences from school will be recorded as 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. All absences are recorded on a child's attendance record, whether or not the absence is authorised, and will affect a child's attendance percentage.

### 2 Aims of policy

- 2.1 The Attendance Policy aims to achieve a minimum of 97% attendance for all children, apart from those with recognised serious health issues.
- 2.2 Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
  - Ensuring that our policy applies to all Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age



- Working in partnership with parents/carers
- Providing clear guidelines for pupils and their families
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

### **3 Legislation or non-statutory guidance**

**3.1** This policy meets the requirements of Department for Education (DfE) guidance and legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and 2013).

**3.2** DfE guidance:

- Working together to improve school attendance – Main Guidance (DfE)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE May 2014)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315587/Equality\\_Act\\_Advice\\_Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf)
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f0a68ea78c5f000dc6f3b2/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2023.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f0a68ea78c5f000dc6f3b2/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023.pdf)

### **4 School procedures**

- School and Nursery start at 08:50. Registers are taken immediately; they are taken again at the start of the afternoon session.
- A pupil who arrives after the taking of the register is marked as late on our electronic sign-in system (InVentry), and the reason for the lateness is recorded.
- A child who arrives after the registers close at 09:10 is marked as absent in the register.
- Parents/carers must always telephone the school office on 01252 873069 or send an email to [office@uplandsberkshire.org](mailto:office@uplandsberkshire.org) by 09:00 if their child is not attending school.
- The Admin Officer will telephone parents/carers on the first morning of an absence if notification has not been received.



- Parents/carers must make contact with the school on the morning of each day that the pupil will be absent from school.
- Regular analysis of absenteeism will be carried out, and letters will be sent to parents/carers if attendance drops to 93%, regardless of the reasons for absence.
- If attendance does not improve, parents/carers may be called in to discuss the matter with the Headteacher and/or Family Support Advisor, and an attendance action plan may be initiated.
- Further absence may result in referral to Bracknell Forest Council and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution.

## **5 Promoting good attendance**

- 5.1** At Uplands Primary School and Nursery, we promote good attendance throughout our school, by the following actions:
- Ensuring a positive and welcoming school environment
  - Tackling mental health and wellbeing issues to ensure that children are mentally prepared and happy to come to school
  - Ensuring that communication between the child, parent/carer and school remains open, honest and supportive
  - Running a weekly class attendance tally for each class, resulting in a reward for the class with the highest attendance at the end of each half term.

## **6 Absence due to illness**

- 6.1** If a child is too unwell to attend school, the parent/carer should keep their child at home.
- 6.2** A child need not stay at home if they have a minor cough/cold, hayfever, headlice (nits), or any other non-communicable illness.
- 6.3** Absence due to illness will be recorded as an authorised absence.

## **7 Appointments**

- 7.1** Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment will usually be counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. 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, attending school before the appointment and returning to school after the appointment. You may be asked for proof of a medical or dental appointment.

## **8 Lateness**



- 8.1** Parents/carers are expected to bring their child to school on time. A child arriving after registration i.e. after 08:50, is disruptive for the class and embarrassing for the child. Vital information is given at the start of the school day and the child's learning may be affected if he/she is not present for the full session.
- 8.2** If a pupil arrives at school is after the registers have closed, the pupil will receive a 'U'. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety requirements.
- 8.3** If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'.
- 8.4** Persistent lateness will be followed up by the school by letter and an improvement in punctuality is expected. If punctuality does not improve, parents/carers may be called in to discuss the matter with the Headteacher and/or Family Support Advisor, and an attendance action plan may be initiated.
- 8.5** Effects of lateness

<b>Minutes late per Day</b>	<b>Equates to Days of Teaching Lost in one Year</b>	<b>Which means this number of lessons missed</b>
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

## **9 Unexplained absence**

- 9.1** We will follow up any absences where the parent/carer has not made contact to explain the reason for the absence. If a parent/carer does not contact the school on the morning of each absence, the absence may not be authorised, unless we are satisfied there is a good reason why the pupil is unable to attend and why the parent/carer was not able to contact the school by the required time on the day of absence.
- 9.2** If a pupil is not in attendance and the school is unable to establish the reason why and/or confirm the pupil's whereabouts, we will take appropriate action, which will depend on the circumstances of each case. This could include, but is not limited to contacting the pupil's emergency contacts, contacting other professionals; contacting siblings' schools; home visits to the family address; requesting a Welfare Check from the police; and making referrals to Children's Social Care.

## **10 Leave of Absence**



- 10.1** At Uplands Primary School and Nursery, we actively discourage term time absences. Our purpose is to ensure that a child achieves their full potential, and there is a clear link between poor attendance and underachievement. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where a parent/carer considers there are extenuating or compassionate reasons for such absence. As outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, the Headteacher will decide if the circumstances are 'exceptional' and thus whether or not the absence will be 'authorised'.
- 10.2** The request, to be made by the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides, must be made in writing using the 'Application for Leave of Absence During Term Time' form available from the school office or school website.
- 10.3** The request must include the reason why it is felt necessary to take leave during term time (the 'exceptional' circumstances).
- 10.4** A leave of absence will only be authorised where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. If a leave of absence is not authorised, the period of leave should not be taken.
- 10.5** Parents/carers will be informed by letter, within seven school days, as to whether the request for leave has been authorised or unauthorised.
- 10.6** Authorisation for term time leave will **NOT** be given for the following reasons:
- A day trip/day out
  - The child's birthday
  - 'Sleeping in'
  - A holiday
  - Availability or cost of a holiday
  - Extended holiday at the beginning or end of the term
  - A term-time booking made in error by the parent/carer or another person.
- 10.7** Parents/carers should ensure that family holidays are taken during school holiday periods only.

## **11 Unauthorised absence**

- 11.1** Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence after a parent's/carer's request.
- 11.2** Please be aware that when a parent/carer contacts the school reporting that their child is unable to attend due to illness or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result, the absence may not be authorised.



- 11.3** If a parent/carer reports that their child is absent due to illness and it suspected that this isn't the case, the absence may not be authorised. The parent/carer will be made aware that the absence will not be authorised.
- 11.4** Term time absence taken without authorisation may, where the criteria for doing so is met, be referred by the school to Bracknell Forest Council. Referral may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued in accordance with Bracknell Forest Council's 'Code of Conduct and Protocol For The Issuing Of Fixed Penalty Notices'.
- 11.5** If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice may be issued to each parent for each child. THE RATE PER PARENT PER CHILD WILL BE £60 IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS AND RISING TO £120 IF PAID BETWEEN 22 AND 28 DAYS.  
Please see the Uplands website for more details on this.

## **12 Persistent Absentees**

- 12.1** The definition of a persistently absent (PA) pupil as set out by the DfE is a pupil with 10% or more absence (90% or less attendance).
- 12.2** If attendance falls below 93%, the school will contact parents/carers to inform them that their child is close to reaching the threshold for persistent absenteeism.
- 12.3** If attendance falls below 90%, the school will contact parents/carers by letter, and a meeting will be arranged with the Headteacher/Attendance Lead to discuss what immediate steps can be taken to improve attendance, including the implementation of an attendance action plan.
- 12.4** Further absence may result in referral to Bracknell Forest Council's Education Welfare Support Services and may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution. This may lead to a referral to Early Help for support
- 12.5** Effects of non-attendance

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	60 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	120 Lessons

## **13 Mental health, Wellbeing, Special Educational Needs and Disability**



- 13.1** Under the Equality Act 2010, schools are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled pupils (defined as those with a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities).
- 13.2** This may include changes to the physical environment, curriculum or the way information is provided, as well as providing auxiliary aids and equipment, or tailored services. Failure to make appropriate adjustments may impact on a pupil's attendance.

## **14 Partnerships**

- 14.1** At Uplands Primary School and Nursery, we believe that pupils learn best when parents/carers, children and staff work in partnership to maximise attendance at school and everyone is clear of expectations and procedures. We expect that as soon as a child starts their education at Uplands Primary School and Nursery, the Attendance Policy is understood and followed.

## **15 The role of the Headteacher**

- 15.1** The role of the Headteacher is to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and supports the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices, where necessary.

## **16 The role of parents/carers**

- 16.1** The role of the parents/carers is to ensure they are fully aware of the school's Attendance Policy and work with the school to ensure the policy is being adhered to. This can be done by:
- Ensuring that your child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness, attendance at a medical appointment or for religious observance or other authorised absence
  - Not condoning your child's absence
  - Talking to your child if there is a concern about their attendance; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving.
  - Talking to school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

## **17 The role of Bracknell Forest Council's Education Welfare Support Services**

- 17.1** Bracknell Forest Council's Education Support Services have a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.



- 17.2** Section 444 of the Education Act states that **'if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence'**.
- 17.3** A Fixed Penalty Notice, when requested by a Headteacher, can be issued as long as the evidence for the request is robust and the following criteria are met:
- Where there is a minimum of 10 school sessions of unauthorised absence (5 school days) in any 10 week period (these do not need to be consecutive)
  - Where term time leave is taken without obtaining authorisation from the school
  - Unwarranted delayed return from term time leave without authorisation
  - Persistent late arrival after the register has closed (U code) on 10 or more occasions in a 10 week period
  - Parents'/carers' failure to make arrangements to ensure that children who have been excluded from school are not in a public place at prescribed times during the first five school days of any exclusion, without reasonable justification.\*

\*It is incumbent upon the parent(s)/carer(s) in such circumstances to provide proof of reasonable justification; for example, that the child needed to attend a pre-arranged medical appointment, or a medical emergency requiring the child to be supervised elsewhere than at home.

## **18 The role of the Governing Board**

- 18.1** It is the Governors' legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate pupil attendance in school. The school's attendance figures are presented to the Governing Board on a termly basis.