

Fulford School

Attendance Policy



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Responsible: Deputy Head Teacher, Pastoral

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1. Introduction

It is the school aim that at Fulford, students and staff should enjoy learning, experience success and develop their full potential. The aim of the Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and achievements of students and staff.

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student 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 students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

The policy has the following further intentions:

- To enhance achievement levels and external examination results;
- To carry out the school's legal responsibilities efficiently to report annually to parents;
- To clarify the responsibilities of different concerned parties;
- To identify tactics that will be effective in the achievement of the above.

These fit in to the broader school ethos, and the HEART core values – honesty, empathy, ambition, respect and tolerance.

For your child to gain the greatest benefit from their education is it vital they attend regularly, on time and every day the school is open. Students should only be absent if it is completely unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absences seriously affects their learning.

Fostering good attendance is shared responsibility of school, the parent, and the Local Authority. Parents have a responsibility to see that their children receive the appropriate education and are responsible for their child attending school.

In detailing the strategies, the school will undertake to ensure improved levels of attendance the importance of the following factors which encourage high levels of attendance must be kept in mind:

- delivering a curriculum, which is relevant, motivating and differentiated to the needs of the students;
- maintaining high expectations (communicated by staff in a variety of ways including punctuality, homework, marking, and extra-curricular activities);
- employing the school's systems of reward for achievement, personal as well as academic;
- using sympathetic re-integration strategies for long-term absentees.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) 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](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The local governing committee

The local governing committee is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, 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 students, 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 students who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all students, but adapts processes and support to students' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students 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 students 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 students, 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
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

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 students

- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Where necessary, authorising City of York Council to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Working with the parents of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader 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 students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr S Copeland and can be contacted via attendance@fulford.york.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 6)
- 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 City of York Council (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Ms S Irwin-Stilgoe and can be contacted via attendance@fulford.york.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers/form tutors 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 attendance office.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin 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/Assistant Head of Year/pastoral lead 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/timetabled session on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before as soon as possible on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Attendance/Pastoral team, who can be contacted via attendance@fulford.york.sch.uk

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session, on time.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority

3. Attendance Data

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

The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session. AM registration being from 8:50 - 9:20 am. PM registration is managed through period 5.

It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every student 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 also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for

Fulford school proactively manage lateness and sets out in this policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a student will be marked as absent. This will be the same for every session. The structure of our day means that the AM register cut off point will be 9.25am. If a student arrives after that time they will be marked as absent for the morning session. If school is not satisfied with the reason for lateness the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

The PM register cut off point will be 1.20pm, meaning if a child leaves school after that point and before the end of the school day they will be marked as present for the afternoon session. We actively discourage late arrival and monitor patterns of late arrival.

- A student is late when they arrive after 8:50 am. Students arriving after 08:50 will be issued a 20-minute late detention, to be served at lunch time the same day.
- Form tutors are responsible for marking the students late until 9:20am.
- Students arriving after 9.00am must sign in late at the Pupil Support Unit (PSU).
- Students are registered at the start of every lesson of the day. It is important that the class teacher enters late arrivals and re-saves the register. A culture of challenging students missing from previous lessons enables students to see the effectiveness of lesson monitoring.
- The register is marked using the DFE Attendance and Absence codes (see Appendix 1)
- The attendance team will work closely with the Head of Year. Suitable sanctions and interventions for students who have ongoing lateness over time concerns will be issued.
- AM registers close at 09:25 any student arriving after this point will not receive a morning registration mark.
- PM registers close at 13:20 student leaving school before this point will not receive an afternoon registration mark.

Attendance data will be collected and analysed and used to inform the School's attendance practices and interventions.

- Individual student data will be analysed and monitored to enable early intervention. Attendance is shared with students on a weekly basis.
- Patterns of absences and lateness, and the identification of trends will be analysed.
- Attendance data is communicated to the Local Authority on a monthly basis.
- Schools must share daily attendance data with government from September. Fulford school do this by having an electronic management information system" which DfE can access and allows an automated flow of data.

4. Attendance Data Collection

As of September 2022, the local authority automatically collects York Schools attendance data at the end of every school day. As a school we also have a requirement to inform the Local Authority of the names of all students who have:

- 10 days or more unauthorised absence in one month, either consecutive or accumulative days.
- 15 days of absence due to illness ~~in one month~~, either consecutive or accumulative days.
- For students with absence due to illness or medical reasons of 10 days or more consecutively in one month, home visits will be arranged for wellbeing and safeguarding reasons, these will occur every 10 days of continued absence unless there are other professionals involved such as the specialist teaching team or medical professionals who have contact on a regular basis with the student.
- Fulford School will also inform a student's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school".

5. Attendance Monitoring System

The procedures we use to monitor attendance will follow:

- Weekly attendance data will be emailed to form tutors (FT), Head of Years (HOY) and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Students will record their weekly and cumulative attendance in their planners each week. Attendance will be discussed with FT, and any trends should be pass to the HOY.
- On the first day of absence contact will be made with the parents when there has been no absence reported. The Attendance Intervention Lead will contact home for students on student attendance monitoring (SAM) and any student that has a record of truancy should the absence be unexplained.
- SAM is the early intervention system for students who have trends in their attendance and it falls below the school target of 96%. The FT and HOY will work closely with the student to discuss any issues or problems that can be addressed to help improve their attendance.
- A letter may be sent home raising the concerns, and informing parents that they will be monitored on SAM.
- If student attendance drops below 90% and becomes persistently absent a fast-track letter may be sent home. Attendance will be monitored for 20 days and any further absence will only be authorised if medical evidence is provided. This could include a prescription, GP appointment card or a letter from a GP or Hospital Consultant.
- If the attendance has not improved parents will be formally invited to attend a school attendance panel (SAP) meeting with relevant members of staff. This will include either member of the Senior Leadership team or a school Governor. Provision will be discussed and targets set for raising the attendance. Failure to provide an acceptable explanation for the absences may result in a penalty

warning letter being issued immediately following the meeting.

- After a further monitoring period, if the targets are met a letter will be sent home to congratulate the student and the family. Monitoring and communication with the family will continue until the attendance stabilises. If the targets are not met, it will be referred to the local authority Attendance Officer and could result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings being taken by the Local Authority

6.2. Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify students 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

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual students, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the students it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 6.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors/Heads of Year/Assistant Heads of Year, to facilitate discussions with students and families, and to the governing committee and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and student premium leads)
- 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 student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate

6.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student 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 students 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 students. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7 and 17)

7. Fast Track Process (see Appendix 2)



8. Staff Managing Attendance

At times staff in school may be required to contact you or organise meetings to discuss a student's absence or patterns of absence, staff involved in these processes may be:

- Headteacher
- Deputy Headteacher (DSL)
- Assistant Headteacher (Attendance and Behaviour)
- Attendance Intervention Lead
- Attendance support coordinator
- Head of Year
- Assistant head of Year
- School Social Worker
- School Nurse
- School Governors

9. Absence procedures

Minor illnesses such as headache, period pains, colds and sore throats are not a reason for absence from school. If your child is still unwell enough for school after administering any appropriate pain relief/medication at home, then contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, and every subsequent day, using either:

- Attendance telephone: 01904 666417)
- Email: attendance@fulford.york.sch.uk

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.

If a child has prescribed medication in school it can be stored for them in the PSU and it can be accessed outside of lesson times. The School Nurse will be involved in communication with parents / carers regarding any medication issued during school hours.

If your child is absent for a prolonged period of time, over 4 days, please provide any medical evidence that you have for our records. This could be a prescription or GP appointment card.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the students parent / carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctors 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.

10. Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may:

- Contact the parent/carer at work.
- Phone other contacts available
 - Make a home visit
 - Contact 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
 - Call the parent/carer or use InTouch text message service on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
 - School may make unannounced home visits if communication with home is not regular and students absences are not recorded.
 - Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the student's youth offending team officer/Social Worker
 - Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents to improve attendance
 - Identify whether the student 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: begin the Fast Track process.

11. Medical appointments

As far as possible parents should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. A full day's absence will not be authorised for a medical appointment, unless in exceptional circumstances. If the appointment is unavoidable your child should come to school before and after the appointment where possible. Students must sign in and out at the PSU.

12. Mental Health

Fulford School is particularly mindful of students absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide them with additional support.

It acknowledges "many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods". (Working together to improve school attendance. August 2024)

But it is "important to note that these students are still expected to attend school regularly". Doing so "may serve to help with the underlying issue". (Working together to improve school attendance. August 2024)

If you have queries on any of the above, please contact the attendance email:

attendance@fulford.york.sch.uk

13. Supporting students who are absent or returning to school

13.1 Students absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Where these are identified, we will make referrals to supporting external agencies and work with families and agencies to support attendance to school. The school will meet regularly with the family and agencies and use an Assess, Plan, Do, Review approach to reduce/remove the barriers to attendance. DfE: Working together to improve school attendance. August 2024 guidance will followed with regards to strategies to support students.

13.2 Students absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Where these are identified, we will make referrals to supporting external agencies and work with families and agencies to support attendance to school. The school will meet regularly with the family and agencies and use an Assess, Plan, Do, Review approach to reduce/remove the barriers to attendance. DfE: Working together to improve school attendance. August 2024 guidance & DfE: Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance February 2023. will be followed with regards to strategies to support students where relevant.

Where a student has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the student's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

13.3 Students returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Each individual situation will be different. We will meet with families and any external agencies involved to develop an individual plan to re-integrate back into school as appropriate.

14. Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels daily via ClassCharts, and via School Reports.

15. Contact Information

It is vital that parent details are correct. There are times when we need to contact parents/carers to discuss absence or more importantly to contact a parent in the event of an emergency. Parents are responsible for notifying the school of any changes in personal contact details. Two contacts must be provided for each student.

16. Authorised and unauthorised absence

Every half day absence has to be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised absence. An authorised absence requires a verbal or written communication from the parent/carer.

Authorised absence are mornings or afternoons away from the school for a good reason like genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absence are those the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. Unacceptable reasons for absence include:

- Truancy
- Looking after younger siblings
- Shopping
- No school uniform

- To do homework/coursework
- Lateness
- Holidays in term time
- Birthdays
- Family celebrations

16.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow students to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student 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
- 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 student is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a student 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. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a student is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the student or a parent they normally live with.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 10 and 12 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student'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
- Parent(s) 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 student is attending educational provision
- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a student to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, 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 student is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student 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

17. Absence requests

In order to improve student's life chances and due to Government legislation parents must observe the school holidays as prescribed. Absence during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example, exceptional significant family events or circumstances.

The Head Teacher will consider every request individually, the following will not meet the criteria:

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends who have different holidays

If you submit an absence request and it is not approved your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please be aware in most circumstances parents can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice where they take a holiday in term time which is not authorised by the head teacher. A fixed penalty notice can require a parent to pay a sum of either £80 or £160. Each parent can be issued with a notice for each child so two parents with two children can potentially be issued with four notices.

From September 2024 only 2 fines can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period. Any second notice will automatically be charged at £160.

New 'notices to improve' will also be the final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued.

What is the effect on your child?

Two weeks absence in every school year would mean your child missed four terms of education during their school life. This could seriously affect your child's progress.

- 90% attendance is the equivalent of 1/2-day absence per week.
- 80% attendance is the equivalent of missing six extra weeks of schooling over a year
- Your child will find it difficult to settle in if they miss school at the start of a new term or when they are moving to a new school or class.
- Your child may miss important educational experiences. It can be very difficult to catch up.
- Preparation and revision for exams and tests may be affected.
- Your child may think that you do not see school as important.

Parents and Carers

- You must always fill in a form to request student absence for exceptional circumstances. This can be found on the school website.
- You should do this before you consider arranging any time for the student to be away from school—there should be exceptional reasons.
- Absence requests should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of proposed absence.

- I. Receive a Fixed Penalty Notice (you may be prosecuted if you do not pay the fine), per parent per child OR
- II. Be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court for your child's nonattendance at School. You can be fined up to £2500 or imprisoned.

17.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of 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.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), 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, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before requesting 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 student
- 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

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 student must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the student'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 student, 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.

National Fine Thresholds

School will have to consider a fine if a pupil misses 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence. For example, four sessions in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late.

The period of 10 weeks can also span 'different terms or school years'

The local authority 'retain the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the threshold is met'. This could include where parents are 'deliberately are avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for birthdays or other family events.'

Notices 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.

Notices 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 student attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the student'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 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

18. Lateness and Truancy

Persistent lateness and truancy are often a significant indicator of under-achievement.

Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will be challenged. Students need to be in their form room at 8:50 am; the gates will be shut at this time. Students will then have to enter through the student entrance and register their lateness with the attendance team in the PSU.

If students arrive after 8:50am they will receive a late mark. However, the register closes at 09:25 and students that arrive after this time will receive a mark of absence. They will receive a mark to show they are on site but will count as an absent mark.

Truancy means any absence of part, or all of, or one or more days from school during which the school has not been notified of this absence. All students are expected to be in their classes between 8:50am and 3:20pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically.

Any student with permission to leave school during the day must sign out with the attendance team in the PSU.

Persistent lateness and truancy will be dealt with immediately and consistently across the school.

Students who are late to school will be issued with a same day lunch detention. Students who are late to lessons receive a Late negative on class charts these contribute to the schools set detention tariffs. Persistent lateness will be reviewed and sanctions potentially escalated.

Students who truant internally (do not attend lessons) will be issued with after school detentions the following day, one after school detention will be issued for each period of absence.

19. Rewards

The importance of high attendance should be regularly promoted by every member of staff. Good and improved attendance will be rewarded by the school with various incentives for individual students, form groups and whole school. These include communication with home, certificates, prize draws, rewards activities in school and trips and visits.

School trips and events are a privilege. Students must ensure they have a good attendance to take part. Where a students' attendance drops below 90% the privileges may be taken away unless absence is authorised and medical evidence provided.

20. The Impact of Good Attendance

Year 11 results show that in 2022 students who had an attendance at Fulford of 95% or more achieved on average 1.1 grade higher across all subjects than equivalent students in other schools with the same Key Stage 2 outcomes. Students with attendance greater than 90% achieved +0.6 in Maths and +0.8 in English.

21. 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 Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing committee.

22. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Mental Health Policy

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
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

GRADUATED RESPONSE GUIDANCE 2024



Fast track process



Key questions to ask when completing the graduated response

- Does the school have clear monitoring procedures for attendance and are the school community aware of these procedures?
- Who will monitor the pupils/families via the fast track process?
- Are the family aware of their responsibilities and attendance targets during the fast track process?
Are these logged as part of the process?
- Which members of staff will lead and support attendance panels?
- Has the wider school community been involved with the family and pupil, for example, SENCO?
- Are the parents engaging with support and attending meetings?
- What support does this family or pupil need? What are the barriers to attending school?
- When the barriers are identified what support can the school put in place?
- Have you requested the support for supporting families and the family information service?
- Does the family need support via an early help or MASH?

Key documents and example letters

- Pages 4, 5 and 8- Legal process letters
- Pages 6 and 7 – Record of attendance panel meeting
- Page 9 – Penalty notice application
- Pages 10 and 11- Attendance template monitoring

Key guidance and support

- **Updated attendance guidance.** [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)
- **Family information service.** This service has access/advice to support for families and students in York -[York family information service – Raise York](https://www.raiseyork.org.uk/)
- **Supporting families team.** This service supports practitioners to complete and deliver successful early helps-
supportingfamilies@york.gov.uk

FAST TRACK LETTER 1

SCHOOL LOGO

ADDRESS
DATE

Dear «ParentCarer_Salutation»

Re: «Pupil_Full_Name» DOB: «DOB»

As the Attendance Lead in «School», my role is to improve attendance and punctuality. I monitor pupils' attendance regularly and follow up on any frequent or unreasonable absences.

«School» would like your support to improve levels of attendance and punctuality, therefore a fast track initiative is currently being run in school in order to address attendance concerns quickly and effectively.

Having recently completed a register check, I am concerned to note «Pupil_Name»'s poor level of attendance and I enclose a copy of their registration certificate for your information. The attached copy has the sessions they were absent for highlighted.

As a result of these concerns, «Pupil_Name»'s attendance will be monitored for the next 20 school days, during which time school will only authorise absences if medical verification is provided. If «Pupil_Name»'s attendance shows little or no improvement after the monitored period, you will be formally invited to a School Attendance Panel in school order to discuss and address the situation.

I am obliged to inform you that under the provision of Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. Failure to do so could result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings being taken by the Local Authority.

If you require advice and support with regard to your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

yours sincerely

Deputy Headteacher (or whoever takes responsibility)

FAST TRACK letter 2

«Date_of_Letter»

«ParentCarer»

«Address_1»

«Address_2»

«City»

«Postcode»

Dear «ParentCarer_Salutation»

Re: «Pupil_Full_Name» DOB: «DOB»

Further to my previous letter advising you that *school* is currently involved in a fast track initiative, having recently completed a register check I am concerned to note that *pupil name* has failed to achieve the attendance target set. I enclose a copy of «hisher» registration certificate for your information. The attached copy has the sessions they were absent for highlighted.

As a result of these concerns and in order to discuss and address the situation, I would like to invite you to a School Attendance Panel to be held in school on «**appointment time and date**». Failure to provide an acceptable explanation for the absences may result in a Penalty Notice Warning letter being issued immediately following the meeting.

If the above appointment is not convenient, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number to make an alternative arrangement, as the meeting will go ahead in your absence if you do not attend.

I am obliged to inform you that under the provision of Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. Failure to do so could result in the issue of a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings being taken by the Local Authority.

I look forward to meeting with you on the due date.

yours sincerely

Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher or whoever takes responsibility for the initiative

DRAFT AGENDA OF ATTENDANCE PANEL

Status of Meeting:	School Attendance		
Name of Pupil:		D.O.B.:	
Address:			
School:			
Date:			
Present:			
Apologies:			
Summary of the discussion: (problems experienced and support agreed)			
A penalty warning letter was given to the parents at the meeting.			
Agencies involved:			
Siblings:		School:	
RECOMMENDATIONS: Be Specific about what you are asking child/parent/family/agencies to do		ACTION BY:	
	(pupil specific)		

To attend school fully		family
School to support by:		school
Examples of recommendations		
To try to make medical appointments out of school time and to attend before/after appointments		Mrs XXXXXXXXX
To provide medical evidence for any absence (appointment card, prescription, hospital letter etc.)		Mrs XXXXXXXXX
Parents advised that leave of absence such as for holidays in term time or trips overseas would not be authorised and any application for leave in term time due to exceptional circumstances must be made to the school in advance.		Mr & Mrs XXXXXXXXXXXXX
(If not issued at the meeting.) A Penalty Warning Letter to be sent with these minutes.		
A Penalty Notice of £80 per parent per child to be issued if there are further unauthorised absences in the next 20 school days.		Make sure that the parent understands that this could lead to legal action
Parent(s) to contact XXXXXXXXXX at the school if they are experiencing any difficulties affecting attendance or need support		

FAST TRACK LETTER 3

«Letter_date»

«ParentCarer»

«Address_1»

«Address_2»

«Postcode»

Dear «ParentCarer»

PENALTY NOTICE WARNING

Re: «Pupil_Full_Name» dob.....

It has been brought to my attention that the attendance of your child is a cause for concern.

The government has introduced powers for the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases where parents do not ensure that their child attends school regularly.

I should inform you therefore that you are liable to be issued with a Penalty Notice under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (as amended). This is due to you having failed to ensure your child, «Pupil_Full_Name», being of compulsory school age and a registered pupil at «School», attends school regularly. During the period «**dates_between**», your child had «**no_of_unauth_abs**» **unauthorised** absences.

It is necessary to point out that we have a duty under the law - Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 - to ensure that children attend school regularly. Failure to do so could end in you, as parent, being brought before the Magistrates' Court. If convicted the maximum fine for this offence is £2500 and/or a maximum 3 month custodial sentence. Alternatively, the authority have the right to issue you with a fixed penalty notice which would mean you have to make a payment of either £80 or £160 depending on when you pay the notice.

If you are experiencing any problems in ensuring that your child does attend school regularly, please speak directly to
.....

School name shares City of York Council and the government's determination to raise the levels of pupil attendance at school because we want to give the best future opportunity for our children.

Yours sincerely

Headteachers name

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES – ATTENDANCE

PENALTY NOTICE APPLICATION

(Please note that for any unpaid Penalty Notice the case may be taken to Magistrates Court. Parents could receive a criminal record and/or Headteachers may be called to give evidence if necessary)

Pupils Name:		DOB:		Year group:	
		School:			
		Possible Attendance sessions		Attendance was unsatisfactory between the dates of:	
		Actual Attendance sessions	l		
		Authorised sessions	k		
		Unauthorised sessions			
Parents/Carers FULL Name <i>(this is essential to the fine being issued)</i>					
Mother -					
Father -					

This Penalty is requested by:	Name	
<i>(this must be a member of Senior Leadership Team)</i>	Designation	
	Signature	
	Date	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Fine paid within the time limits	Date:
Fine increased and paid	Date:
Fine not paid referred to Magistrates	Date:

_____ **ATTENDANCE ADVISER**

Attendance monitoring

School/Cluster - Bedrock School

Date/Term – Spring 5000BC

Pupil Name	Att. %	No. of absences in previous 10 weeks	Date of letter (1)	No of un.auth.abs in first monitoring period.	Move to next stage (yes) or record NFA	Date of SAP letter (2)	Date of SAP meeting	Parent present at SAP?	(Date) PNW letter given or delivered	No of un.auth.abs in second monitoring period.	Att. % 20 days after PNW letter	Referred for a Penalty Notice Yes/no	Withdrawn from process (reason)
Fred	81%	10	6/1/14	4	Y	3/2/14	11/2/14	yes	11/2/14	0		No	
Barney	72%	15	6/1/14	8	Y	3/2/14	11/2/14	no	13/2/14	0		No	
Wilma	80%	11	6/1/14	4	Y	3/2/14	11/2/14	yes	11/2/14	0		No	
Betty	76%	19	6/1/14	2	Y	3/2/14	11/2/14	no	13/2/14	6		yes	
Pebbles	77%	12	6/1/14	6	no								Family crisis
Bambam	75%	10	6/1/14	2	Y	3/2/14	11/2/14	yes	11/2/14	2		no	Medical issues clarified by GP

