

Written by:	Mr C Clinton
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# Attendance and punctuality Policy

## **Aims, intentions and ethos**

Archbishop Ilsley's ethos is underpinned by the teaching of the bible. In St Matthew's gospel, Jesus tells his disciples, they should "let their light shine." We want pupils to be inspired by Jesus' words and be aspirational, achieve highly and experience a wide range of opportunities. Regular attendance at school is fundamental in achieving this.

Evidence proves that there is a direct correlation between a pupil's attendance and their attainment. As a result, it is the governing body's unwavering belief that pupils' attendance should be as high as possible. Pupils should be encouraged to appreciate the benefits of attending school every day through positive reinforcement.

Archbishop Ilsley is proud of the relationship it has with its parents and the local community. Schools are most successful when parents and schools work in partnership. Much of this policy was gleaned from the document, written by the Department for Education (DfE) entitled 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Pupils and parents must also realise that the School will have a clear, robust and consistent strategy to deal with pupils who are persistently absent. Expectations remain the same for sixth form.

The School's aim is to create a safe, positive and caring environment in which all members of the school community can thrive. The governing body wishes to foster an appreciation of the value of education and the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in the pursuit of excellent academic standards.

If the school has a concern regarding a pupil's attendance, parents/carers will be notified. There are clear procedures for the reporting of absence (see below) and this policy is available as a paper copy on request or from the School Website. The taking of holidays during the school terms is strongly discouraged.

The School's Management Information System (Bromcom) system will be used to monitor attendance at registration and lessons. Attendance figures are reported annually and appropriate targets are set for the following year. Attendance figures are monitored on a regular basis by the Senior Leadership and Heads of Year.

The school will work cooperatively with external agencies to deal with problems of irregular attendance. The school will keep accurate records of all exclusions and, in accordance with statutory guidance, report them to the Governing Body and the Local Authority. The school will take appropriate action to reduce the need to exclude pupils.

We continue to monitor the attendance of the following vulnerable groups:

- Looked after Children;
- Pupils from ethnic minorities;
- Pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium;
- Pupils who are adopted;
- Pupils who have a parent in prison;
- Pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan or SEN status.

### 1. Legal obligations

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be during morning registration of each school day and in afternoon registration. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

### 2. Targets and Glossary

To improve attendance levels for the 2023/204 academic year (last year's attendance at Archbishop Ilsley was 89.9%)

To reduce the percentage of pupils who are persistently and severely absent.

**Persistently absent** means a pupil's attendance is below 90%.

A **severely absent** pupil's attendance would be below 50%.

### 3. Late pupils

If pupils have a legitimate reason for being late (e.g. doctors or late bus, etc) proof of appointment should be provided.

**What is the process when a pupil is late?**

8:00 – the gate at Holy Souls opens. This is the pupil entrance (Victoria Road is for parents, visitors and sixth formers only). A member of SLT will have a pen and 'late sheet' on a clipboard. Between 8:00 and 8:40 the teacher will greet pupils.

From 8:40 until 9:10 – the pupil is late. Their name will be recorded.

Registers close at 9:10. Pupils arriving after this time will have to enter via Victoria Road, sign using Inventory and will be signed in as arriving 'after registers close'.

#### **4. Supervision before and after school.**

Pupils who enter the school before the gates are open at 8am do so at their own risk.

There is no after school facility - such as 'after school club'. All pupils should leave the school site within 10 minutes of the of the school day. The exception to this if they are partaking in an after school activity. It is not the school's responsibility to supervise pupils after this time.

#### **5. Strategies for encouraging and promoting attendance**

The following strategies are used to promote positive attendance:

- At times throughout the year, the School will launch a '20-day challenge' pupil will receive a reward if they are on time and present every day over a work period. Strike days, exceptional circumstances (such as a bus break down) or medical appointments do not effect this.
- Celebrate improved attendance.
- Narrate improving attendance.
- Promote benefits in assemblies
- Meeting with parents to discuss issues
- DSLs will walk around the local area and cajole pupils to enter school on time
- Arrange events and invite 'hard to reach parents' whose children have poor attendance to events
- Form teacher will partake in attendance monitoring where they review attendance, call parents, talk to pupils about reasons for non-attendance and alerting their Head of Year of potential problems.
- Monitoring of days taken off for religious observance/extended holidays.
- Careful monitoring of all pupils with under 95% attendance and short term action planning where appropriate.

- Continuing improvement of the school environment.
- Working closely with parents of pupils whose punctuality is a problem.
- Continuing to develop a range of strategies aimed at addressing the Emotional Health and Well-being of our pupils.
- Anti-bullying week and review of procedures during the year.
- Continuing to develop in-school support for pupils with behavioural problems.
- Parental booklet for new pupils highlighting the benefits of regular attendance and the rules regarding term time holidays and Year 7 Introductory evening.
- Attendance rewards and awards (which will be reset every half term)

## **6. Truancy**

Teachers should wait ten minutes to report truancy by performing an 'On Call' measure on Class Charts.

Pupils who are not in lesson without a legitimate reason, who are not with a member of staff or who are not in their designated 'safe place' as agreed with their Head of Year, SLT or DSL team, will receive a 1-hour detention after school on Friday.

## **7. Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders**

The school will fulfil the following objectives:

- Have clear procedures for school attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that all pupils and parents understand the issues and procedures for attendance and are aware of the benefits of regular attendance.
- Maintain high levels of communication with parents regarding pupil absenteeism.
- Reward regular attendance through the school rewards system.
- Ensure that attendance issues are addressed in the curriculum.
- Give parents and pupils the opportunity to raise concerns and share in the addressing of those concerns.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents and external agencies to ensure educational entitlement and regular attendance.

It is hoped that parents will help in the following ways:

- Not letting their child take time off school for minor ailments;

- Arranging appointments and outings after school hours, or as late as possible in the afternoon, at weekends or during school holidays;
- Not taking holidays during term time.

The importance of regular attendance will be emphasised by including the table below in the planner, ABI update, social media and communication sent to parents

Attendance during one school year	Equals days absent	Which is approximately weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	250 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	290 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	340 lessons

**All Form Teachers** have a duty and responsibility to promote good attendance. The Form Teacher will ensure that morning registration is a friendly and welcoming place. Most importantly, he/she will mark the register promptly in the morning (before 9am) and ensure it is accurate before it is submitted. The form teacher should be the first person to question a long absence in a sensitive fashion, but also question the pupil if he/she has more than one absence in a half term (especially in the first half term). They should record lates with an 'L'.

It is the role of the **Head of Year** to follow up any concerns highlighted by the Form teacher, and will then alert the Attendance Officer and the Assistant Head in charge of their Year group of possible problems. Year Heads will be responsible for monitoring pupils in their Year Groups whose attendance is **between 95-90%**.

It is the role of the **Assistant Head** to follow up any concerns highlighted by the Head of Head, to alert the Attendance Officer and the Assistant Head i/c Attendance of possible problems. Assistant Heads will be responsible for monitoring pupils in the Years for which they have responsibility, whose attendance is **between 90-80%**.

It is the role of the **Safeguarding Team** to liaise with pupils, parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure good attendance and punctuality. The Deputy Head will be responsible for monitoring pupils whose attendance is **below 80%**. This will involve actions appropriate

to the nature of the concern and may involve a meeting with parents or contact with relevant external agencies.

The **Head Teacher** is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Head Teacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Head Teacher will also make decisions on leave on absences (e.g. only funerals of a close relative will be considered for authorisation).

It is the role of every **Subject Teacher** to take a register during every lesson and to alert the member of Senior Staff on duty if they have any concerns. If pupils leave the lesson, or are not present due to a medical appointment, this will be entered onto the system by the Attendance Officer. It is not necessary for the subject teacher to make any reference or comment about attendance. They should make late pupils on the register. If they are teaching period 5, they should check their registers and escort pupils down to the late detention.

It is the role of the **Attendance Officers** to monitor attendance and punctuality on a daily basis. They will monitor attendance of the pupils who are a safeguarding concern and make it their next priority to ascertain the whereabouts of these pupils with the help of the safeguarding team. They will also monitor the submission of registers by form and class teachers and will remind teachers to take their registers. On a weekly basis, they will email SLT the following:

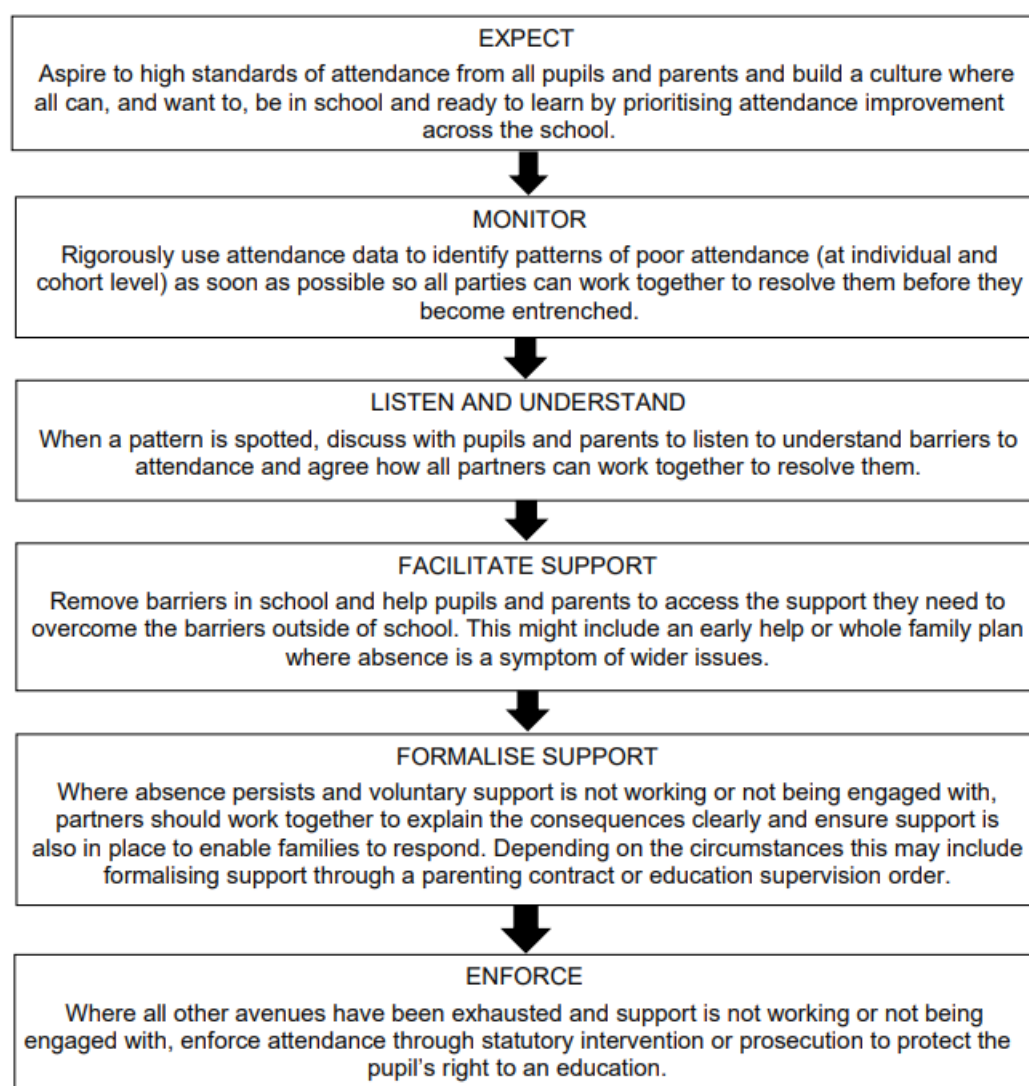
- The names of pupils who were late
- The daily attendance from yesterday
- The half termly attendance so far, by year group
- The names of any persistently absent pupils (along with safeguarding pupils, she will also make this a priority to ascertain their whereabouts).

They will then remove 'n' codes as soon as possible by the following ways:

- Receive calls from parents
- Call parents who child is absent
- Contact parents to ask for an explanation for absence
- Look for trends for pupils who have a poor attendance record
- Send a series of incrementally serious letters to parents whose child is persistently absent
- Begin the fining process for persistently absent pupils

## 8. Working Together to improve attendance and punctuality

This flow diagram is taken from page 8 of the DfE document:



## 9. Persistent Absence

Since September 2015, Archbishop Ilsley has been following the government guidance regarding persistent absence. From this date the Department for Education (DfE) announced that any pupil whose attendance fell below 90% would be classed as a Persistently Absent pupil. Therefore, if a pupil misses 19 or more days over an academic year they will be classed as 'persistently absent'. The attendance of all pupils is strictly monitored following the procedures detailed in this policy. Where attendance has become a concern, parents will be informed by phone call initially, then letter, of the school's concerns and meetings will be arranged between the school, parents and the pupil to set targets for improvement. Where the school is concerned about the number of unauthorised absences it will inform parents by letter, that the Head Teacher will no longer authorise any absence unless supported by medical evidence.



The school keeps a detailed list of all Persistent Absentees and actions that have been taken to support them with attendance issues. This is regularly updated. In addition, every member of staff, who has a role in attendance has to detail their interventions on Class Charts.

If any pupil reaches 10 or more unauthorised absences the school will follow LA procedures for fast tracking Attendance concerns.

#### **10. Severely absent pupils**

As per the DfE guidance, attempts will be made to re-engage the family of pupils who are severely absent. They will be offered additional targeted support and a 'joint approach' will be agreed with the family.

#### **11. Missing/Absent in education**

The term 'children missing from education' has been replaced with 'children who are absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeated occasions'. Pupils are defined as children who are absent from education for prolonged periods if there has been no contact for 5 days. In this situation, a home visit will be made. If contact can be made, CASS (Children's Advice Support Service) will be contacted.

#### **12. Barriers/young carer**

The school will be understanding if a child is a young carer. The school will work together with the family to remove barriers. This be on a case-by-case and bespoke basis.

#### **13. Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances**

Only in exceptional circumstances will the school grant absence for pupils during term time. The decision to authorise absence is at the Head Teacher's discretion based on the assessment of the situation.

The Head Teacher cannot authorise absence but will consider if it is the funeral of a close family relative. If the funeral is abroad, consideration should be made by parents about the length the child is away from school.

Circumstances vary in each situation so there are no absolute rules on this subject. In all situations, parents will be interviewed and evidence will be required, where it is deemed appropriate. The safety of our pupils is paramount and we will investigate each situation and outside agencies may be informed.

#### **14. Reintegration after a period of absence**

The School will treat reintegration of a pupil who has been absent for a long period sensitively. This will begin with a meeting between key stakeholders and a discussion based on the barriers to a consistent attendance record. It may be appropriate that the pupil begins on a reduced timetable or shorter school day. They may spend time in the Hub or the Character Centre. This is a short term solution and pupils will be reintegrated to a full timetable as quickly as possible.

#### **15. Religious Observance and respecting Eid**

The governing body is very keen to respect religious festivals or holy days, such as Eid. When Eid falls on a school day, the school will enter the 'r' code. Pupils who are not Muslim and do not provide a genuine reason for absence will be given an authorised absence ('o' code).

#### **16. Medical or dental appointments**

Wherever possible, medical or dental appointments should be made outside of school hours or during the school holidays. The governing body understand that this may not always be possible. In such cases, the pupil should bring proof of the appointment (letter/appointment card), collect a form from reception and ask for a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) to give written permission.

#### **17. Pupils who are too ill to attend school**

If a pupil does not attend school for fifteen continuous days due to illness, they will be dual registered at James Brindley (Birmingham's hospital school). The School provides education for children and young people whilst they are in hospital or are unable to attend mainstream school due to their medical conditions or special educational needs.

#### **18. Fining parents for persistent non attendance**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay the fine with the stipulated time frame. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head Teacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

### 19. Monitoring and evaluation

The Assistant Head Teacher in charge of attendance will meet the safeguarding team on a weekly basis (every Monday morning) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and the procedures and will take the following actions:

- Hold attendance assemblies for the year groups with poor attendance
- Speak to pupils with poor attendance as a group and as individuals
- Revisit the procedures, check their effectiveness and make amendments where necessary
- Write to parents
- Promote the importance of attendance in the ABI update
- Check for trends
- Check the weekly attendance across year groups

In addition, attendance will be included in the weekly bulletin.

### 20. Codes for use on Bromcom:

Codes for use on Bromcom:	Description
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
B	Educated Off Site – e.g. College
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual Registration
E	Excluded
G	Family Holiday Not Agreed

H	Holiday
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registration closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointment or sickness absence
N	No Reason Yet Provided for Absence
O	Unauthorised
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious Observance
S	Study Leave
T	Travellers Absence
U	Late After Registration is closed
V	Educational Visit
W	Work Experience
X	Non-comp School
Y	Enforced Closure

### 21. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our behaviour, child protection and safeguarding policies

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