



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rooted in our local community, together we build a welcoming sanctuary where everyone is shown love, care and respect. Inspired by Jesus, we nurture the ethos 'not to be served, but to serve' (Matthew 20:28) and our work is reflected in our motto **'Feeding body, mind and soul'**.

Attendance Lead	Mrs Jane Davies
Status & Review Cycle	Annual
Next Review Date	October 2026
Policy reviewed	October 2025

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Promoting and supporting punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil 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 ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

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

This policy also refers to the DfE guidance on the school census which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices for pupils who have more than 5 consecutive days term time absence (other than for serious illness) and whose attendance is generally low

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance, if different to the Head Teacher

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Head Teacher/designated senior leader responsible for attendance
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Head Teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is **Mrs Marianna Vousden** and can be contacted via telephone: **01628 622708** or by email to: **office@boynehillsschool.org**

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office by 9am in a morning and by 1.40pm in an afternoon.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Refer calls from parents/carers to class teachers, the SENCo or the Head Teacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and arrives by 8:55am at the latest
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils on to this register.

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

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

We will also record:

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

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The morning register will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The afternoon register will be taken 5 minutes after pupils re-enter their classroom after lunch and will be kept open for 5 minutes.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by emailing or calling the school office (see also section 7). A message can be left on the absence line.

If a child is absent due to vomiting or diarrhoea, they should not return to school for **48 hours**. This will reduce the risk of infection to other children and adults at school.

If a child has another contagious infection, for example conjunctivitis, we recommend not returning to school until 48 hours after the first dose of treatment. In the case of chicken pox, we ask that pupils do not return to school until the spots have scabbed over and no new spots are developing.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

4.3 Planned absence

Every effort should be made to arrange dental/medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, they should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

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

Parents will be informed at the beginning of each academic year about the process for requesting leave of absence. In order for consideration to be given, requests must be for exceptional circumstances only and made at least 4 weeks in advance of the date(s) for which the leave of absence is being requested. A Request for Leave of Absence form is available from the school office. Parents will be actively discouraged from taking their child out of school during term time for family holidays or extended trips abroad, for any reason. These will be unauthorised from the term following their child's 5th birthday.

Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school may authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Parents/carers are required to fill in a 'Late In - Early Out' book, which is in the main reception area, whenever they bring their child in late or need to take them out during the school day.

In the case of a child who is frequently late, the school will seek reasons why and offer support to parents/carers. For persistent and unresolved lateness, the school will issue a letter to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding the lateness prior to the engagement of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). It is hoped that a quick response and change in arrival time will prevent the need for EWO involvement.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach the pupil's parents/carers they will call the pupil's other emergency contacts
- 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. If a reason cannot be ascertained, an unauthorized mark code will be used
- Call the parent/carer 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 the Education Welfare Officer

In-line with our safeguarding procedures, if the school has concerns about a child's absence and cannot reach any emergency contacts and there are genuine concerns about the child's safety, the school will call the Police.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be done at the end of each short term and as a whole year percentage in the end of year report in the Summer term.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Head Teacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Head Teacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- The funeral of a parent, grandparent or sibling – the number of days is at the Head Teacher's discretion having heard from the parent/carer(s) about travel and funeral arrangements and taking into account the distance to be travelled. A maximum of 3 days may be authorised
- Serious illness of a close relative – the number of days is at the Head Teacher's discretion having heard from the parent/carer(s) about the circumstances and taking into account the distance to be travelled. A maximum of 3 days may be authorised
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport, operating at a high standard of achievement, or for a modelling or performing contract, and agreed by the Local Authority
- Religious observance – one day will be authorised for the observance of a major religious festival
- The wedding of parents or siblings – weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays, however, we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors such as the needs of the couple getting married. A maximum of 2 days may be authorised

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

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional:

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative

- Pilgrimages by parent/carer(s) (e.g., Hajj). These can result in children being away from school for significant periods of time (at least 5 days). They are not regarded as exceptional as young children themselves do not perform Hajj but tend to travel with their parents/carers when they go
- Holidays taken in term-time due to lower cost/parental work commitments

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form, which is available from the school office. The Head Teacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and dental/medical appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school may request the Local Authority to fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

Penalty notices can be issued by the Local Authority Officer or the Police at the request of the Head Teacher.

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

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance is celebrated at Boyne Hill in assembly at the end of each short and long term. Class total percentages are read out for that term and the class with the highest percentage wins a book for the classroom story area.

At the end of each long term, pupils with 100% attendance receive a special certificate.

7. Attendance monitoring

As much as possible, the Head Teacher liaises with the Attendance Officer on a daily basis to ascertain which pupils are absent and why. The Head Teacher produces a termly attendance report for different groups of pupils including class groups, pupils considered disadvantaged and those with special educational needs (SEND) and shares this report with the Governing Board.

Family circumstances vary so at Boyne Hill, pupils are treated as individuals and any persistent absence will be respectfully monitored and support offered to parents/carers.

If it is identified that particular groups of pupils are showing persistent absence, e.g., a particular class group, the reasons for this will be looked into and support put in place to ensure attendance improves.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the Governing Board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The Head Teacher will:

- Regularly discuss attendance with class teachers in order to support conversations with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Write to/email parents/carers to share concerns about attendance and to clarify expectations
- Hold meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or Local Authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated and as a minimum, every 2 years, by the Head Teacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Full Governing Board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Attachment Aware Behaviour

Appendix 1: Attendance codes which will be used at Boyne Hill CE Infant & Nursery School

The following codes are taken from the DfE guidance on school attendance

ATTENDANCE		
Code	Meaning	Notes
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session	
L	Late arrival before the register is closed (between 8.55 and 9am)	The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed. If a pupil is recorded with code N but arrives later in the session after the register has closed , the attendance register must be amended to record them as absent using code U or another absence code that is more appropriate.
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	
P or B	Attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority	
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
P	Participating in a sporting activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
B	Attending any other approved educational activity, e.g., transition day at another school	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
ABSENT – Leave of absence		
Code	Meaning	Notes
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	Parents should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
J1	Leave of absence for admission to another educational institution	
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	

D	Dual registered at another school	The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	
ABSENT – Other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.
R	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day using this code; the rest of the time would need a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences.
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Only used where a pupil is absent because the local authority has a legal duty to arrange home-to-school travel for the pupil and they have not done so, or because the pupil has no choice but to attend a school that does not qualify for such travel arrangements and is more than walking distance from where they live.
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home (2 miles) and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the

		admission register at the time must be recorded with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent.
ABSENT – Unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N. Where absence is recorded as code N in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session. Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O.
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.
ADMINISTRATIVE CODES		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.
#	Planned whole school closure	Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • days between terms; • half terms; • occasional days (for example, bank holidays); • weekends (where it is required by the management information system); • up to 5 non-educational days; and • use of the whole school as a polling station.