



**Penketh  
High School**



## **PENKETH HIGH SCHOOL**

### **Policy: Attendance and Missing Pupil Policy 2023/2024**

<b>Policy owned by</b>	<b>R Taylor</b>
<b>Date Approved by Local Governing Body</b>	<b>September 2023</b>
<b>Signature of Chair to Local Governing Body</b>	<b>M Bryan</b>
<b>Signature of Academy Principal</b>	<b>J Carlin</b>
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>August 2024</b>

## 1. Introduction

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The Government expects schools and local authorities:

- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- To ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and act early to address patterns of absence.
- To parents and carers to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- To all pupils to be punctual to school and their lessons.

### **School Attendance - Statutory guidance and departmental advice- Department for Education (DfE) (September 2018)**

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to achieve their full potential. Penketh High School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's 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's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Penketh High School values all pupils. As set out in this policy we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.

### **Legal Framework**

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive appropriate full time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16. Pupils are expected to continue in education or training for a further two years until the age of 18.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and, where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & Amendment 2018 requires schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

## **2. Aims**

- To promote good attendance and punctuality to and within school amongst all pupils.
- To meet targets regarding attendance.
- To enable all pupils to have full access to the curriculum through regular attendance.
- To enable pupils to return to school after a period of absence with any necessary support.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Penketh High School believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

As such, the Governing body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parent/carers
- Annually review the school's policy.
- Regularly review attendance matters.
- Ensure there is a named person to lead on attendance within the school
- Ensure the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The school will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- Support pupils to achieve their full potential and expect regular attendance to best prepare them for life after school.
- Form positive relationships with parents/carers and pupils
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance with good teaching and learning experiences that encourages all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off site are implemented.
- The school will report the pupil's attendance record each term on the Progress Review Reports.

- The school will inform parents in cases of known truancy.
- The school will contact parents within a reasonable timeframe regarding any unexplained absences.
- In the case of absence due to prolonged illness the school will provide work in liaison with parents/carers.
- When the number or frequency of absences gives cause for concern or the attendance falls below 90% parents will be contacted by the school's Attendance Officer and necessary external agencies which may include the LA Attendance Team.
- Parents of pupils that arrive late to school will be informed by text message that day.
- Persistent lateness will be treated seriously, and parents will be informed each time a pupil is late to school. Pupils that are late to school will receive an automatic detention unless extreme circumstance. Parents of pupils that are persistently late will be required to attend a meeting in school to discuss the issue and agree a way forward.

Request that parents/carers will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance
- Contact the school, on a daily basis before 8.30am (9.15am on a Friday) if their child is absent to let them know the reason why. Follow up this with a note or email
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make any medical or dental appointments outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school: take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term time, where this is unavoidable, send a written leave request to the head teacher in advance of booking the holiday

#### 4. Categories of Absence

**Authorised** – Parents have informed the school of the absence and the reason for it. This has been agreed as reasonable by the school. Reasonable reasons are listed below:

- Absence due to pupil illness for which a communication has been received from the parents. Medical evidence maybe required to have an authorised absence.
- Other authorised circumstances, e.g. bereavement, serious family crisis, emergency school closures etc.
- Any form of exclusion.
- Family holiday for which leave has been granted due to exceptional circumstances only.
- Medical (GP or hospital appointment or dental appointment for treatment) absent for the whole session only. Routine check-up appointments should be made for outside school hours wherever possible.
- Day of religious observance for the religious body to which the parents belong.
- Transport difficulty (if no alternative available).

**Unauthorised Absence** is recorded when parents have not contacted the school or where the reason for the absence is inappropriate and not acceptable to the school, such as:

- Sibling's school is closed.

- Shopping.
- Holidays during term time that have not been granted permission for exceptional circumstances by the Principal.
- Parents/ carers are expected to avoid making dental, medical or opticians appointments during the school day as these are available after hours and in holiday periods. Should an appointment in school hours be unavoidable pupils are expected to only be out of the school during the appointment time only and under no circumstances should a pupil be absent for a whole day. Please provide evidence for such appointments no later than 24 hours before.

If an absence is likely to be prolonged, please contact the Pastoral team so arrangements can be made to send work home.

#### **Approved Educational Activity off Site**

- Receiving education off site or other than at the school where registered
- Approved sporting activity
- Work experience/placement
- Educational visit or placement (including college-link courses)

#### **Holidays**

- From 1 September 2013 the government has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 so as to remove Principals' right to authorise holidays in term time. This took effect from 1 September 2013 and applies to all maintained schools and special schools not maintained by the Local Authority. Therefore, from September 2013 holidays will not be authorised unless extreme circumstances. All holidays and appointments should be made outside of school time and should not impact on attendance.
- There are thirteen weeks available for family holidays during the year and holidays in school time are only allowed in exceptional circumstances.
- In the case of an unavoidable holiday in term time, parents must ask permission from the Principal two weeks in advance explaining the circumstances behind the request.
- If the school gives permission this will appear as an authorised absence on the child's records, however this could still have a negative impact on your child's attendance, and any pupil with below 90% attendance could incur a referral to the LA Attendance Service.
- If the school does not consider the reason to be acceptable or there are a number of requests, then this would be recorded as an **UNAUTHORISED** absence on the child's records. The parent/carer would be informed of this before the commencement of the holiday.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter should state:

- The expected date of return.
- That parents must contact school should any delays occur.
- That the child's place may be withdrawn if the family do not return as expected.

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. This means that the child may lose their school place.

Only in exceptional circumstances will absence of more than 10 school days be agreed. In such cases, consideration will also be given to cultural needs and family circumstances, such as children returning to their country of origin. In these cases granting leave for longer periods than normal may be authorised.

It must be understood that the permission would be given at the discretion of the Principal.

## **5. Monitoring**

Form Tutors, The Attendance Team and Head of Year will regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils and discuss any concerns with parents. If attendance/punctuality continues to present a problem, they will involve the Vice Principal (Pastoral) and Attendance Officers and any necessary external agencies that may include the Local Authority Attendance Team. Robust tracking systems are used to ensure pupil absence is quickly identified to enable staff to work closely with pupils and parent/carers to intervene effectively and efficiently.

- The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily/weekly and half termly basis.
- A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3) and every morning that they will be absent from school.
- Attendance officers monitor weekly tracking sheets from form tutors and ensure that every absence is accounted for.
- If a pupil's absence goes above 2.5 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.
- If a pupil's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer, there will be a staged approach to look at risk of persistence absence. Calls/texts/letters/ meeting and external agencies may be involved e.g. Education welfare office
- The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classed as a persistent absentee.
- Attendance Officer will inform the Vice Principal – Pastoral of any missing registers.
- Associate Assistant Principal/ Vice Principal – Pastoral will ensure that all staff are aware of the importance of taking accurate registers promptly.
- Vice Principal –Pastoral will follow the agreed disciplinary procedure for staff who frequently fail to complete their registers promptly and accurately.
- Pupils that are considered 'high risk' will have an individual risk assessment which puts in place a plan if they go missing or are off site without permission.
- Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's 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.

Penketh High School collects and stores attendance data for internal purposes to support monitoring, tracking, analysing and providing the pupils with the correct support/ intervention for example:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in the need of intervention and support.
- Recognise and reward improvements

## **6. Reward System**

As a way of encouraging good attendance, the Attendance Team will work with each to monitor those pupils who achieve above very good / excellent attendance each half-term and reward pupils in Achievement Assemblies.

Pupils who have 100% attendance for the Academic Year will receive a certificate and an award at the end of the year in Achievement Assemblies. Other pupils may also be rewarded at the discretion of the Attendance team and the Head of Year, for example those with significantly improved attendance.

All pupils will receive a certificate for their annual attendance according to their final attendance percentage.

- Bronze Attendance Award being (96-98% attendance)
- Silver Attendance Award being (98-99% attendance)
- Gold Attendance Award being (100% attendance)
- Platinum Attendance Award being 100% attendance for successive years.

The pupils will also be rewarded with attendance bonus weeks as a means of raising attendance at times identified when it is likely to drop. Pupil voice will take place to look at recognising Excellent attendance and attitudes through reward trips/activities.

## **7. Pupils with Attendance and Punctuality Concerns**

Pupils with poor attendance/punctuality patterns will be placed on personalised plans/report. It will be monitored by the Form Tutor and any problems will be referred to the Head of Year.

Pupils with poor attendance will also be referred to the School Attendance Officer who will work and liaise with any necessary external agencies that may include the Local Authority Attendance Team. It is the role of this School Attendance Officer and any other associated attendance agency to become involved with the family. Pastoral Support Programmes may be put in place for some pupils.

In the case of pupils with poor attendance/punctuality records, the following strategies may be considered:

- Special report
- Change of Form Group
- Change of Curriculum
- Involvement of the Attendance Officer
- Involvement of external services and providers.
- Involvement of wider Pastoral team
- Involvement of Inclusion team

## **8. Support Systems**

Penketh High School recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents/Carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance record or behaviour in school e.g. bereavement, divorce/separation, and incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Penketh High School also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and children in care.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels
- Referrals to support agencies
- Time limited reduced timetables
- Reintegration support packages
- Reward systems

Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occur, Penketh High School will consider the use of legal sanctions.

## **9. Punctuality**

It is important that pupils arrive promptly each day. Pupils who arrive after 8:30 (9.15am on Friday) will be marked as late. The pupil will be expected to attend a late detention after school. Should the pupil fail to complete the after school detention, parents will be informed and the consequences maybe escalated. Failure to complete the previous sanction will be dealt with in line with the whole school Behaviour policy. Late arrival is registered on the system and a text message will be sent to parents. The number of minutes late will be recorded and totalled for information. Parents will be informed if their child has missed a significant amount of school through poor punctuality and will be invited in to a parental meeting with the Vice Principal/ Assistant Principal/ Head of Year to discuss the reasons for lateness. Pupils arriving after 10:00 a.m. will be marked absent for the morning session. All pupils should sign in at reception and obtain a mark in the register when they are present in school.

## **10. Missing Pupils**

### **Aims**

The welfare and safety of all pupils at Penketh High School will be given our highest priority. A missing child should be an extremely rare occurrence. Every adult that works at the school is aware they have a responsibility for helping to keep all of our pupils safe at all times.

- The Education Regulations require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupils were present, absent, present at approved activity or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. Further registers are taken within the first 10 minutes of every lesson.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises during school time without the consent of a parent or guardian and the permission of a member of staff. In this event all pupils must sign out at reception and have a valid 'signing' out' slip.

It is possible that on some occasions a child may leave the premises without either knowledge or permission. This Policy is designed to be put into place swiftly and effectively in order for actions to be taken to locate any missing pupil, and to notify and involve parents and the authorities at every point.



## Definitions

A pupil may be considered missing if they cannot be located at any point during the school day.

## Objectives

- To locate any missing pupil quickly.
- To ensure that all pupils are kept safely on the school premises during school hours unless they have permission to leave.
- To ensure that pupils who leave school during the school day only do so:
  - with the permission of a parent or carer, and
  - with the permission of a member of staff, and
  - that they are accompanied by an authorised adult.
- To ensure that the buildings and grounds are safe and secure during school hours.
- To ensure that all teachers and school staff keep the children under proper supervision at all times.

## Implementation

- The Attendance Officer will contact home for every pupil marked absent for morning registration unless parents have contacted school with a reason for the absence- First day response
- Class teachers will take a register within the first 10 minutes of every lesson.
- If a pupil is missing from a lesson and their whereabouts are not known, the Attendance office must be notified immediately and told where and when the child was last seen.
- Senior Staff Patrol will be alerted and will conduct a search from the last known location.
- If the pupil is not located within 30 minutes Parents or Guardians will be informed.
- The Police must be called on 101 by either the Principal or other member of the Senior Management Team. This will be a maximum of 30 minutes after the parents have been informed and the pupil still cannot be located. Members of staff, where available, may be sent to search the local area.
- If a pupil is missing during an outing or school visit the teacher in charge must ensure that the remaining pupils are safely cared for by other staff and adult helpers. An urgent but thorough search should be made of the immediate vicinity and if the pupil is not located quickly the Police must be called and the Principal and school notified.
- School will immediately notify the pupil's parents.
- The Local Authority will be notified by the Principal that a pupil has gone missing.
- If the pupil has been located the Principal, Police, parents and the Local Authority will be notified.
- The Principal will investigate how the incident occurred and will take the appropriate action to ensure that similar events do not happen again.

## Responsibilities

The following individuals have responsibilities with regard to missing pupils:

- Principal: To ensure that the school is compliant with legislation and to report to the governing body
- Vice Principal – Pastoral: To promote the importance of taking accurate registers at the start of every lesson. This includes Form Tutors at morning registration and Subject Teachers at the start of every lesson.
- Subject Leads: To ensure subject teachers are regularly taking an accurate register at morning registration.
- Heads of Year: To ensure Form Tutors are regularly taking an accurate register at morning registration.
- Form Tutors: To ensure that an accurate register is taken at morning registration and inform the Attendance Officer of any concerns.

- Attendance Officers: To ensure that parents are informed of the pupil's absence by a text message or phone call within the first hour of every day.
- Governing body: To review this Policy and to ensure the school is compliant with legislation.

### **11. Children in Care**

The school will endeavour to ensure that these children achieve their academic potential, attend school regularly and are monitored closely. The school Champion for Children in Care is the Christine Stanley and lead teacher is Kelly Smith.

### **12. Deletions from the Register**

In accordance with the Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & Amendments (Sept 2018), pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- The pupil ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfers between schools
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school age
- In custody for more than 4 months
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and the local authority has failed to locate the pupil

Penketh High School will follow Warrington Borough Council's missing education protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

### **13. School Closure Attendance Procedures**

Penketh High School will comply with up-to-date Government guidance and communicate with parents/carers who (if any pupils) should be attending school. They will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not arrive at the school. All contact and welfare checks made with learners where there are concerns raised will be recorded on CPOMS and passed onto the schools safeguarding teams. Schools should continue to follow the DFE guidance on welfare and support.

**Attendance of students working from home-** Attendance will be tracked via remote platforms where possible. This can be used to provide stakeholders with information regarding student's engagement to learning. In circumstances where there has been no engagement, schools will inform parents/guardians to provide support as necessary.

School closure policy will directly relate to procedures if this was to occur.

#### **14. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum each year by Claire Lomax, Vice Principal. At every review, the full governing board will approve the policy.

#### **15. Related Policies and Procedures**

This policy to be read in conjunction with these other school policies and guidance:

- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Children with Health needs who cannot attend school
- Climate for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Unforeseen School Closure Policy
- School attendance - Statutory guidance and departmental advice. (DfE - Education (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 & Amendments (Sept 2018))

## Appendix A: Attendance codes

### Present or Approved Educational Activity Marks

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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

### Authorised Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

### Unauthorised Absence

Code	Definition	Scenario
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

## Other Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

**Appendix B: Attendance Procedure Flow Chart**

**ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES-IN LINE WITH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

