



Attendance Policy

Amended by	Anne Davis	Date: February 2025
Approved by:	Richard Keightley	

Last reviewed on:	Updated May 2025 to reflect current practices. August 2023
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Next review due by:	May 2026 (or if further guidance changes)
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This policy reflects the vision and aims of the school by:

- Encouraging staff, parents and pupils to maximise the learning experience in order that all Pupils can reach their full potential.
- Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Principals

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment and future success depends on good attendance allowing each pupil to experience the full school offer.

We expect all school personnel to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel safe and valued and enjoy coming to school.

Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances, it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family/personal circumstances.

Good attendance links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
 - To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
 - To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
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- To work with our other schools to share good practice in order to improve practice and policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Proprietor and Governing Body

The Proprietor and Governing Body will:

- Delegate powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy.
- Nominate a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Attendance Champion and to report back to the Governing Body.
- Ensure that the attendance policy is carried out.
- Ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders.
- Monitor termly progress.

- Take responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly.
- Take responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to carers and parents.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure the 'Pupil concerns list' is up to date and accurate and is known by the key staff.
- Ensure all school personnel, pupils and carers are aware of and comply with this policy.
- Undertake the daily monitoring of school attendance and record using the school attendance database.
- Target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders or have been highlighted through monitoring and data analysis around attendance.
- Have in place a system for carers to report a child's absence.
- Report the attendance figures and progress to the Governing Body.
- Remind carers of their commitment to this policy.
- Publicise good attendance during whole school meetings, newsletters and the termly report to the Governing Body.
- Introduce rewards and incentives to encourage punctuality to lessons and positive attendance.
- Organise training for school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance [New MIS system to be introduced 2025/26].
- Work closely with the Attendance Champion who will have the role of liaison for those pupils who struggle to maintain high attendance.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

Role of the Attendance Champion

The Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy with the Headteacher.
- Monitoring individual and class attendance daily.
- Keeping the Headteacher informed of attendance figures and trends.
- Liaise directly with House Managers/Key Workers where there is cause for concern.
- Compiling attendance data for the Headteacher, the Governing Body and respective local authorities and virtual schools.
- Ensuring registers are completed in a timely way and are kept up to date.

- Informing the Headteacher of trends in absence.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- Comply with and implement this policy.
 - Set an example of punctuality and good attendance.
 - ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times and are accurate and up to date.
 - Monitor class and individual attendance patterns.
 - Inform the school office of any concerns about attendance.
 - Emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
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- Discuss individual pupil attendance with Attendance Champion and SENCO.
 - Reflect attendance in PEP/STAT reports.

Role of the Governors

Governors will:

- Work closely with the Headteacher and Attendance Champion.
 - Ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date.
 - Ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy.
 - Report to the Governing Body every term.
 - Annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.
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Role of the Care Team

The Care Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance.
 - Informing the school on the first day of absence.
 - Informing the school of any changes to their contact details.
 - Collecting their children on time
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- Supporting the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school

Role of Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- Arriving at school on time.
- Knowing the value of good attendance.

- Arriving in lessons on time and remaining for the duration.
- Taking part in questionnaires and surveys

Dealing with Trends in Attendance

When there is a pattern of poor attendance then the following procedure will take place:

- House Managers/Key Workers are invited to attend an informal meeting with the Attendance Champion/Headteacher to discuss the child's repeated absence.
- Persistent absence will be discussed and reviewed in weekly Managers' Meetings.
- Support will be offered if there are underlying reasons for the absence.
- If not, then the situation will be monitored for improvement.
- If there is no improvement, then appropriate action will be taken.

Dealing with Lateness

The Attendance Champion and teaching staff monitor lateness and inform:

- The Headteacher of patterns of lateness.
- House Managers/Key Workers of the school's concerns.

Absence

Holidays during term time – Apple Orchard School and its wider community provide a unique environment of care and education and every request for term time absence will be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis with input buy the whole holistic team.

Religious Observance – a maximum of three days absence is allowed for religious observance.

Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the child's education.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- The school website.
- Meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- School events
- Meetings with school personnel
- Regular communications with the respective house staff.
- Headteacher reports to the Governing Body

Pupils who struggle to attend school

Pupils are sometimes reluctant to attend school, and every effort will be made to work with the student and care teams to establish a viable, individualised solution.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence

Every half-day absence must be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing from the Key Worker/House Manager.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.

This includes:

- Students being kept from school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained

House Managers/key Workers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may extend the conversation to the respective local authority and/or virtual school.

It is not usually appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

All other absences and holiday requests

DfE regulations regarding absence no longer permit holidays to be taken during term time. Headteachers are not to authorise any leave or absence from school unless the circumstances are 'exceptional' relating to a 'one off' isolated situation. Any such request, for example 'contact time' must be submitted in good time in writing.

Information about individual school targets

The school has adopted the following attendance targets:

Any attendance which falls below 97% is enough to set off initial concerns records. Attendance of less than 90% should become a cause for concern.