Attendance Policy
26-27

May 2025

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1. Aims

At Amberley Primary School, we believe that pupils can only benefit fully from their education if they attend regularly. Regular attendance is central to pupils' academic achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and future life chances. Everyone has a role to play in promoting excellent attendance. We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole school approach that values good school attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Ensuring every child has access to full time education
- Building and maintaining a strong relationship with families to enable targeted support to better school attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Promoting the importance of arriving to school and lessons on time to support punctuality

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Governing Body

The governing body 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
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

2.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy
- 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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- 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

2.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring 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 Headteacher.
- Working with relevant school staff to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed penalty notices

The attendance officer is Mrs Harris and can be contacted via 0191 8140970 or at office@amberleyprimary.co.uk

2.4 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

2.5 School admin staff School

admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents [and pupils] to the Headteacher or class teacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

2.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time making sure they are in the line on the yard for **8.50am.** ***The main entrance should not be used except in exceptional circumstances***.
- Call the school to report their child's absence as soon as possible on the morning of the absence and by **9am** at the latest and on 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

2.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

3. Recording attendance

3.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil 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 if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken by 9am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

3.2 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 calling the school office staff (see also section 7). Or by leaving a message on the school absence line.

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.

3.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Please telephone (0191 814 0970) or email the school office on office@amberleyprimary.co.uk to advise school of medical appointments in advance.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and evidence of the appointment (e.g. appointment card, hospital letter, appointment text msg) should be provided to the school office.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

3.4 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.
- School will use the 'U' code for arrivals after 9:30am

Ongoing patterns of lateness will be challenged. School may send a letter, telephone or request a meeting with parents/carers to establish what barriers are preventing punctual attendance.

3.5 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 any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a home visit or seek support from Children's Services or the police to ensure the child is safe.
- 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 – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- 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 a Local Authority School Attendance Support Officer.

The school recognises that poor attendance may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns and will respond to unexplained or persistent absence in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

3.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels termly by emailing parents their child's attendance certificate so they are aware of their attendance percentage and pattern for that half term. Hopefully, by informing parents termly, we can work together to address any attendance issues before they escalate.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher 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 headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, by emailing office@amberleyprimary.co.uk The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- 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

4.2 Extended Leave

When a child is absent from school for an extended period (i.e 15 school days or more) the parent/carer should advise the school of the temporary address.

4.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can 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 £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

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
- 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 or withdraw the notice.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £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 issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

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 fixed period or permanent exclusion. These penalty notices are charged at £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance will be celebrated:

- In assemblies and via displays as part of ‘The Attendance Race’.
- Certificates for 98%-100% or improved attendance, both termly and annually.

- Promoted on the school website and via school social media pages.

6. Attendance monitoring

Amberley Primary School use the Arbor Management Information System which provides electronic registers and attendance reports which can be generated to look at specific student demographics as well as individual attendance patterns.

6.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are individual children or particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Letters will be sent out to parents/carers advising them of attendance concerns and in some cases parents/carers will be asked to come in for an attendance meeting. Attendance meetings will take place in school to discuss how we can support families in achieving better attendance for their children. These meetings may involve support officers from the Local Authority or the Early Help team.
- NB. Where school has significant attendance concerns which may include safeguarding concerns, this process can be fast tracked and could include home visits from school

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 body.

6.2 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

6.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions 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

6.4 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
- Hold regular meetings with the parents 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

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher, attendance officer & governing body. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

8. Supporting Attendance

8.1 A Supportive, Whole-School Approach

At Amberley Primary School, we believe that good attendance is essential to achieving positive educational outcomes and promoting pupils' wellbeing. We are committed to working in partnership with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies to identify and remove barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity. We recognise that every pupil's circumstances are different and that effective support is often more successful than sanctions in improving attendance.

School will adopt a support-first approach by:

- Building strong relationships with pupils and families.
- Listening to and understanding barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with families to improve attendance.
- Providing early help and targeted support where required.
- Working with external agencies where additional support is needed.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of interventions and adapting support where necessary. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

8.2 Attendance Support Pathway

Where attendance becomes a concern, the school will implement a graduated response which may include:

Universal Support

- Promotion of high attendance expectations.
- Regular communication with families.
- Celebration and recognition of good attendance and improvement.

Targeted Support

- Attendance monitoring and analysis.
- Communication with parents/carers regarding emerging concerns.
- Meetings with families to identify barriers and agree actions.

Enhanced Support

- Individual attendance plans.
- Referrals to Early Help or external support services.
- Multi-agency meetings where appropriate.
- Attendance contracts or formal support plans.

Formal Intervention

Where supportive strategies have not secured improvement, the school may work with the Local Authority to consider legal interventions available under current legislation, including penalty notices and other attendance enforcement measures. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

8.3 Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may experience additional barriers to attendance.

Where attendance concerns arise for a pupil with SEND, the school will:

- Work closely with parents/carers to understand the barriers affecting attendance.
- Consider attendance concerns within the context of the pupil's identified needs.
- Liaise with relevant professionals, including the SENDCO, Educational Psychologists, health professionals and Local Authority services where appropriate.
- Consider attendance as part of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews.
- Ensure support strategies are reasonable, proportionate and tailored to individual needs.

The school will seek to balance high expectations for attendance with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments where required. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

8.4 Mental Health and Wellbeing

The school recognises that mental health difficulties can affect a pupil's ability to attend school regularly.

Where attendance is affected by mental health needs, anxiety or emotionally based school avoidance, the school will:

- Work with pupils and families to understand the underlying causes.
- Develop individual support plans where appropriate.
- Consider reasonable adjustments and phased reintegration arrangements where necessary.
- Seek advice and support from relevant professionals and services.
- Maintain regular communication with families throughout any period of difficulty.

The school will promote attendance while ensuring pupils receive appropriate support for their emotional wellbeing. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

8.5 Children with a Social Worker and Vulnerable Pupils

The school recognises that children with a social worker and other vulnerable pupils may be at greater risk of poor attendance.

Attendance will be closely monitored for pupils who are:

- Subject to Child Protection Plans.
- Children in Need.
- Previously Looked After Children.
- Looked After Children.
- Receiving support from Children's Social Care.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school will work closely with families and relevant professionals to ensure attendance forms part of wider safeguarding and support plans. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

8.6 Young Carers

The school recognises that young carers may experience challenges that affect their attendance.

Where a pupil is identified as a young carer, the school will:

- Work sensitively with the pupil and family.
- Consider whether caring responsibilities are affecting attendance.
- Signpost families to appropriate support services.
- Make reasonable adjustments and provide support where appropriate. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

8.7 Part-Time Timetables

In exceptional circumstances, a temporary part-time timetable may be agreed where it is considered to be in the best interests of the pupil.

Part-time timetables:

- Will only be used as a short-term intervention.
- Will have clear educational and wellbeing objectives.
- Will be agreed in consultation with parents/carers and relevant professionals.
- Will be formally reviewed on a regular basis.
- Will include a planned pathway for the pupil's return to full-time education.

Part-time timetables will not be used as a long-term arrangement or as a substitute for appropriate SEND or alternative provision. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

8.8 Working with Other Agencies

The school is committed to working collaboratively with a range of services where attendance concerns require additional support.

These may include:

- North Tyneside Local Authority Attendance Team.
- Early Help Services.
- Health professionals.
- Children's Social Care.
- SEND services.
- Educational Psychology Service.
- Other relevant support agencies.

The school will share information appropriately and in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements to ensure pupils receive the right support at the right time.

The school will:

- Build relationships with students and families to encourage regular school attendance.
- Analyse and use data and relationship knowledge to prevent regular absence.
- Use resources (School based and external services) to intervene early with support.
- Use targeted support for persistent/severe absences.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour for Learning policy

10. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of working together to improve school attendance 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
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

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

- Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance
- Support for pupils where mental health issues are affecting attendance (Effective practice examples)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following registration is effective from July 2026 – working together to improve school attendance

Attendance codes are determined nationally by the Department for Education and may be updated from time to time. The school will apply attendance codes in accordance with current statutory guidance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	The pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	The pupil is present at the afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	The pupil arrives late before the register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	The pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
K	Off-site educational activity	The pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the local authority
D	Dual registered	The pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
P	Sporting activity	The pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	The pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	The pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	The pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Leave of absence	The pupil should be participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence – Part-time timetable	For compulsory school-age pupils who are on an agreed part-time timetable
E	Suspended or permanently excluded	The pupil has been suspended or permanently 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	The school has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
J1	Leave of absence	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/ admission to another educational institution
M	Medical/dental appointment	The 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	Parents travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child due to the parent travelling from place to place for business/trade

Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements	The pupil is unable to attend due to a lack of travel arrangements made by the local authority
Y1	Unable to attend due to lack of transport	Where the school or local authority normally provides transport which is not available; and the school is beyond reasonable walking distance
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend 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
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school being unexpectedly closed	Where the whole school was planned to be open but remained closed unexpectedly
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	If the pupil is in police detention or on remand to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Pupil travel to or attendance at the school would be contrary to restrictions set by the secretary of state for health

Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	The 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	The school is not satisfied with the reason for the pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	The pupil arrived late and after 30 minutes from the start of the session

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
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 halfterm/bank holiday/INSET day