




# ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
	
Date of review	May 2025
Date of next review	May 2026

**NEW POLICY ADOPTED MAY 25**

# ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

This policy has been drawn up and has been written in accordance with the nine equality strands – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (protected characteristics). The impact of this policy on the nine equality strands will be reviewed and reasonable adjustments made if any detriment occurs.

Lindsworth School fully complies with the attendance requirements of The Education Act 1996. This policy is drawn up taking into account the Department of Education’s statutory guidance “Working together to improve school attendance” which applies from 19 August 2024. The senior attendance champion on the school leadership team responsible for the strategic approach to attendance is Julie Coombs, Deputy Headteacher.

## **Statement of intent**

The Governing Body is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our students. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. The school actively promotes 100% attendance for all our students and we use rewards across the academic year to promote good attendance and punctuality. We recognise that parents / carers have a vital role, and a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance and we identify, investigate and work in partnership with parents / carers, students and other agencies to resolve attendance problems. We are mindful that our young people’s needs mean that this may be an area of challenge and firmly agree with Birmingham’s framework around ‘Support First’ - linked here:

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/29520/support\\_first\\_school\\_attendance\\_framework\\_and\\_guidance](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/29520/support_first_school_attendance_framework_and_guidance)

## **Attendance responsibilities**

<b>Name/job title</b>	<b>Role in attendance</b>
Julie Coombs Deputy Headteacher (Senior Attendance Champion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and in line with Birmingham’s ‘Support First’ framework.</li> <li>• Ensure provision to support young people’s attendance is evaluated as part of their EHCP review.</li> <li>• Analysis of attendance and punctuality data, agreement and monitoring of actions</li> <li>• Oversight of attendance team and process within school</li> </ul>
<b><u>Attendance Team</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance of attendance and punctuality data, ensuring all data is accurate and up to date</li> <li>• Liaison with all internal staff regarding attendance and punctuality, providing any reports or information required</li> <li>• Follow up of pupils with severe absence (50% or less), following ‘Support First’ approach including: home visits for safe and well checks (as per KCSIE, 2024 guidance) or to complete work with pupils; referral to external agencies for the pupil/ their family</li> <li>• Support of young people with mental health difficulties, Emotionally Based School Avoidance, following the #you’vebeenmissed campaign</li> <li>• Participating in Formal Attendance Meetings, including offering and implementing ‘Support First’, completion of attendance contract and offer of Early Help Assessment.</li> <li>• Making referrals to ELIT for Notice to Improve or Penalty notices</li> </ul>
Tracey Cook (Attendance)	
Emma Gunn (Pathfinder)	
Debbie Roe (Attendance)	

	to be issued.
<p>Pastoral Managers:</p> <p>Kate Knutton (KS2)</p> <p>Vicky Merriman-Cook (Yr 7)</p> <p>Trevor Francis (Yr8)</p> <p>Jason Brookes (Yr9)</p> <p>Carmel Ruhan (Yr10)</p> <p>Tracey Cook (Yr11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor attendance and punctuality of pupils within year group on a daily basis, making attendance team aware of absences each day.</li> <li>• Contact parents/carers over absence concerns on a daily basis, including calling each day a pupil is absent (this will happen by 10am each day; 10:30 am for Key Stage 2).</li> <li>• Tracking and monitoring of attendance data, contacting parents/carers if there are concerns.</li> <li>• Participating in informal attendance meetings, including offering and implementing 'Support First' for pupils whose attendance is of concern</li> <li>• Completing of 'the Signs of Safety Framework' (3 houses) form.</li> <li>• Making referrals to external agencies</li> <li>• Liaising with external agencies to support pupils and their families</li> <li>• Support with travel assistance, if this is a barrier to attendance</li> <li>• Continual positive regard- warm welcome back to school when pupils have been absent.</li> </ul>
Form Tutors / PALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete registers by close of registration (09:30am for 7-11; 10:00am for Key Stage 2)</li> <li>• Promote good attendance and talk with individual pupils regarding attendance concerns</li> <li>• Foster positive relationships to identify potential barriers</li> <li>• Liaise with Pastoral Manager to discuss attendance concerns</li> <li>• Continual positive regard- warm welcome back to school when pupils have been absent.</li> </ul>
Class Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Register taken within first 10 minutes of each lesson</li> <li>• Identify any unauthorised absences and follow internal school protocol in reporting student absence from lessons</li> <li>• Support in catching up on work missed</li> <li>• Continual positive regard- warm welcome back to school when pupils have been absent.</li> </ul>
Parents / Carers	<p>All pupils attending Lindsworth School have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). <b>Where the school is named on a pupil's plan, parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends that school regularly.</b> This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.</p> <p>Good attendance is essential for children to get the most out of their education, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider development. If a young person does not attend school regularly, it can have an impact on the qualifications they can achieve, their emotional well-being and sometimes, can put them at risk of anti-social behaviours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that pupils are up and ready to be collected by their transport</li> <li>• <b>Contact school before 9:30am</b> if their child is absent for any reason, or if they are going to be late. This must be done directly to your child's Pastoral Manager- <b>messages passed to the minibus/taxi drivers are not acceptable.</b></li> <li>• Try to take medical appointments outside of the school day</li> <li>• Always take holidays outside of term time</li> </ul>

## **Punctuality**

- Pupils are expected onsite for 8:45am, ready for their tutor group at 9:00am. Pupils arriving after 9:30am will be marked as late (L).
- Pupils arriving after 9:30am will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U) for the morning session.
- If a parent/carer has concerns about their child being late due to transport, they should raise these concerns with the relevant Pastoral Manager in the first instance.

## **'Support First' meetings**

- Where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance, these will be raised by the Pastoral Manager in the first instance. The aim of this meeting is to offer support to increase the pupil's attendance, including:
  - Completing 'The Signs of Safety Framework' (3 houses) form
  - Offering an Early Help assessment
  - Working alongside other agencies to support the pupil/their family
  - Ensuring the correct support is in place, via an EHCP review (where necessary)
  - Supporting with travel assistance
  - Addressing barriers to good attendance
- If there are further absences, or Early Help has been refused, a Formal Attendance Meeting (FAM) will be held.
  - Parents/carers will receive a letter inviting them to a meeting, with at least 7 days' notice. Both parents will be invited to this meeting. Where there is a concern around domestic violence or animosity between parties, an offer of separate meetings will be made.
  - If you are unable to make the first meeting, another meeting date will be offered. If you do not attend this meeting, you will be offered one additional opportunity to attend the meeting.
  - The FAM proforma will be completed, along with the attendance contract, which should be signed.
  - If Early Help support is accepted, the attendance will continue to be monitored and will be reviewed in conjunction Early Help's family plan.
  - If Early Help is not accepted, where parents/carers do not attend the FAM or choose not to sign the attendance contract, school will monitor until the end of the contract term.
  - If the attendance contract has been complied with, school will continue to support
  - If it has not been complied with/ there has been a further 10 sessions of absence within a 10 week period, school will refer on to ELIT.
- The Local Authority will review all of the evidence. At this point, they may:
  - issue a 'Notice to Improve', where there is a final opportunity to improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued.
  - pass for legal by giving an opportunity to pay a penalty notice (For 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> offences)
  - pass for direct prosecution by referring to the Magistrates Court.

## **Penalty notices**

- In Birmingham, penalty notices are issued in line with the 'Support First' Framework:

- Following a Formal Attendance Meeting (FAM), if there are 10 further sessions of absence within a 10 week period, a Notice to Improve will be issued
- In the following 6 weeks (30 school days), if there are any further unauthorised absences, a penalty notice will be issued (one per parent, per child)
- If this is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority will consider instigating court proceedings
- A penalty notice can also be issued if a suspended / excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours
- First penalty notice is £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 between days 22 and 28.
- Second penalty notice is £160 within 28 days as the discount does not apply.
- If a third offence is committed within 3 years, the local authority cannot issue further penalty notices and will seek alternative actions, such as prosecution.

### **Term time leave of absence**

- From 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, state that schools are only able to grant a leave of absence under the following circumstances:
  - Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
  - Attending an interview
  - Study leave
  - A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable- only for exceptional reasons
  - Exceptional circumstances eg: death of a parent/carer or sibling; life threatening illness of parent/carer or sibling; leave for medical forces personnel who are prevented from taking their leave at any other time.
- An application should be made to school, at least 2 weeks prior to the dates required.

### **Term time leave for holidays**

- Birmingham City Council strongly discourages pupil leave of absence during term time for holidays. The expectation is that such leave would only be authorised in the most exceptional circumstances. For example: 1 week of leave for a close relative's funeral abroad.
- An application must be made to the school if this is the case. The application must be completed at least 2 weeks before they are due to leave.

### **Statutory defences**

- Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, states that parents are guilty of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:
  - With leave (the school has given permission)
  - Due to sickness or unavoidable cause (this must relate to the child, not the parent/carer)
  - Religious observance
  - Failure by the Local Authority to provide transport (once it has been applied for by the parent)

### **Illness absence**

- If there are 3 or more instances of illness in a half term / 5 or more absences within a term, school will meet with parents/carers. At this point, parents/carers may be asked to take their child to see a GP to rule out any underlying medical conditions. If your child/family has a Social/Early Help worker, they will be notified at this time.
- The pupil's attendance will be monitored for a further 6 weeks. If their attendance drops to 85% or below, consent will be sought for a referral to the school nurse.

### **Other absences**

- The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:
  - Absence due to a sibling having a day off (eg INSET day)
  - Oversleeping
  - Clothing/uniform
  - Confusion over school term dates
  - Child/family birthday

### **Medical evidence**

Parents may be required to provide medical evidence if their child has been absent due to illness for more than 3 consecutive days, or there are persistent and repeated cases of absence. Where absence becomes a concern, parents/carers may be required to provide medical evidence for any further absence. Failure to provide medical evidence will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

### **Persistent absence**

- If a pupil misses 10% (19 days) or more sessions across the academic year, they become a 'persistent absentee'. This has a detrimental impact on student progress and wellbeing, so all stakeholders are required to work together to improve the young person's attendance.
- Attendance procedures are triggered when a pupil's attendance is below 96%. This can happen in a variety of ways:
  - Student meeting
  - Letters
  - Meetings with parents/carers and other stakeholders
  - Offer of referral to external agencies

### **Severe absence**

- If a pupil is absent for 50% or more of the sessions, the attendance team will support families for attendance to improve. There will often be a multi-agency approach.

### **Child Mental Health and Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)**

- 'Support First' will be offered to all pupils experiencing EBSA. Where parents/carers and school work together, legal action will not be required.
- School will consider whether a STICK referral is appropriate and will use the #you'vebeenmissed resources to support young people during this time.  
Link here: <https://forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/youvebeenmissed/>

- Any plan for young people experiencing mental health difficulties around school attendance will be done with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible while supporting the underlying health issue.
- Plans may involve making referrals to external professionals for additional support.
- The DfE guidance is clear that where support has been offered but not engaged with; more formalised support of legal enforcement of attendance is an option which should be considered.

If your child regularly misses school, this can have a detrimental impact on them. We wish to work together to support all of our young people to succeed once they leave us, which starts with good attendance. This shows how many lessons pupils miss when they are out of school.

<b>Attendance during one school year</b>	<b>Days Missed</b>	<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Lessons Missed</b>
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	58 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	116 Lessons
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks	174 Lessons
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	232 Lessons
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks	290 Lessons
70%	57 Days	11.5 Weeks	334 Lessons
65%	67 Days	13.5 Weeks	392 Lessons