



Frizinghall Primary School

# Attendance Policy

Approved by the governing body on: Autumn 2 2023

To be reviewed on: Autumn 2 2024

Signed on behalf of the governing body: S. Afzal

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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
- 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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 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'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](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 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
- › Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- › Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The governors will monitor pupil attendance through the Curriculum and Standards Committee meetings and through the Headteacher's termly report to the full governing body.

### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- › Implementation of this policy at the school
- › Having an oversight of data analysis
- › Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- › Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- › Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

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
- › Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- › Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- › Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- › Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lisa Wetherall and can be contacted via the school office on 01274543072 or via mobile on 07508030254.

### **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 designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the designated senior leader and headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- › Supporting the designated senior leader in delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The attendance officer is Mrs Ferdausjahan Begum and can be contacted on 01274543072 – select option 1.

### **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 following registration.

### **3.6 School office staff**

School office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system, where necessary
- › Transfer calls from parents to the attendance officer or designated senior lead for attendance in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- › Record pupils arriving after the completion of the register and those leaving during the day

- › Provide parents with extended leave forms on request

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Message or 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 1 emergency contact number for their child
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 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:

- › For pupils of compulsory school age, 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 at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.20am. The register for the second session will be taken at the end of the lunch break (reception and KS1 – 12.45pm, LKS2 – 1.15pm and UKS2 12.20pm) and will be kept open for 30 minutes from this time. The school closes at 3.20pm.

### **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 via Studybugs or by calling the school attendance line or office (see also section 7).

The Studybugs app is the best way for parents to contact the school about attendance and punctuality as this information is fed directly into the register. Staff will endeavor to respond at the earliest opportunity.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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.

### **4.3 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.

The Studybugs app can be used to inform school of any medical or dental appointment. Evidence of the appointment (eg. text message to confirm the appointment) must be shown when collecting the pupil from school or when returning the pupil to school, evidence may be sent to the attendance officer using the Parent Partnership Team email - [parents@frizinghall.bradford.sch.uk](mailto:parents@frizinghall.bradford.sch.uk).

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.

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.

### **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

Punctuality will be monitored and letters and meetings will be held with parents when persistent lateness occurs.

### **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:

- Message parents via Studybugs to remind parents to provide a reason for the absence on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence.
- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason if parents do not respond to the reminder. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact emergency contacts, organise a home visit or ask the police to carry out a welfare check (if there are safeguarding concerns)
- 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 the Local Authority Attendance Team

### **4.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via Studybugs, parent consultation evenings and the end of year report. If there are attendance concerns then the parent will be informed about their child's attendance and absence levels via letters, phone calls and meetings. If attendance drops below 95%, the parent will be notified via Studybugs. If attendance drops below 90%, the parents will be notified via Studybugs.

## **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **5.1 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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one-off events, which are unavoidable.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the attendance officer or school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental 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/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' 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
- Bereavement and funerals abroad

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers 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 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.

Where families take two or more periods of unauthorised leave in a 12-month period, or when a period of four or more weeks of leave is taken, Bradford Council will utilise the option to start legal proceedings via the magistrates' court, instead of issuing a penalty notice. This means that parents may be liable to receive a significantly higher fine (up to £2,500 per child, per parent) if found guilty, as well as receive a criminal record, which may be reportable to employers (for example, via a DBS Check). In rare circumstances, magistrates can consider a custodial sentence for up to 3 months.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We will promote good attendance through: achievement assemblies, newsletters, attendance displays, school twitter feed, attendance certificates, communication with families, half-termly rewards and individual reward schemes.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

Individual and group attendance will be monitored and analysed by the attendance officer and the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Senior Leadership Team in order to identify individuals, cohorts and groups who need support with their attendance.

School uses the Bradford Staged Intervention approach to School Attendance, which is based on the Continuum of Need and Risk.

Stage 1: Needs met by Universal Services available to all

Children with levels of attendance between 90% and 100% will usually receive support from the school's attendance officer through a mixture of telephone calls, letters and informal meetings with parents.

Stage 2: Universal Plus: additional support which may or may not require multi-agency work with other professionals.

Children with attendance of 90% and below are considered to be Persistently Absent (PA).

Children with attendance below 90% will require additional support to return them to over 90%. The support will take the shape of either welfare support or via the initial stages of enforcement action. The amount of welfare support/enforcement action undertaken by the school should be judged on a case by case basis, but there is an expectation that Welfare Support underpins any Enforcement Action, and vice-versa. The school has 3 trained Early Help Lead Practitioners (the Deputy, Assistant Head and Family Learning Mentor) who work with the attendance officer to support families.

Stage 3: Targeted Support/Partnership Plus – Help and support from a range of professionals for families with complex needs.

When all attempts to engage with the family at intervention stages 1 and 2 have failed, and the criteria has been met, the school will refer to Bradford Council to undertake a Stage 3 Intervention, which initiates a criminal investigation in line with the Criminal Investigation Process.

## **7.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence three weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular individuals or groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

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.

## **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 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

## **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
- Implement Stage Two and Three of the Bradford Staged Intervention Approach (see 7) 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

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the designated senior leader for attendance. 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:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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



<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2: attendance on a page

Attendance	Lost Learning	Outcome/Intervention
100%	Fantastic attendance and learning	<p>You must report any absences via Studybugs or phone before 9am. Appointments should be made out of school time.</p> <p>School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reward good attendance</li> <li>Monitor attendance and let you know if there are any concerns</li> </ul>
95 - 99%	Up to 9 days of school missed, approximately 50 lessons	<p><b>Stage One Intervention</b></p> <p>You must report any absences via Studybugs or phone before 9am. Appointments should be made out of school time.</p> <p>If attendance falls below 95%, school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make parents aware of this and work with parents to address any missing marks and monitor for 3 weeks</li> <li>Send school letter one if no improvements are seen and there are outstanding missing marks or unauthorised absences and monitor for 2 weeks</li> <li>Send school letter two if no improvements are seen or there are outstanding missing marks or unauthorised absences (A different letter will be used at this point for children with medical conditions) and monitor for 3 weeks</li> <li>Send school letter three, which invites parents to a meeting if no improvements are seen and complete the attendance meeting form setting targets and outlining actions by parents and professionals. This will be monitored in line with the individual family circumstances and the outcome of the meeting.</li> <li>Provide support through Early Help or referral to other relevant services (this may impact on the progress through stage 1)</li> </ul> <p>If attendance improves, school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reward improved attendance during stage one.</li> <li>Continue to monitor closely until attendance is over 95%.</li> <li>Reinstate the stage one intervention process if there is any decline in attendance following a period of improvement.</li> </ul>
80% - 90%	<p>85% = 29 days, 150 lessons</p> <p>80% = 38 days, 200 lessons missed</p>	<p><b>Stage Two Intervention</b></p> <p>You must report any absences via Studybugs or phone before 9am. Appointments should be made out of school time.</p> <p>If attendance falls below 90%, school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only authorise absence when suitable evidence is presented.</li> <li>Issue warning letter 1 and monitor for 3 weeks</li> <li>Invite parents to a panel meeting and complete a parent contract and monitor for 3 weeks</li> <li>Provide support through Early Help or referral to other relevant services (this may impact on the progress through stage 2)</li> <li>Consider whether a Penalty Notice should be requested</li> <li>Issue final warning letter and complete the statutory intervention request form (intervention by local authority)</li> </ul> <p>If attendance improves, school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reward improved attendance during stage one.</li> <li>Continue to monitor closely until attendance is over 95%.</li> <li>Reinstate the stage two intervention process if there is any decline in attendance following a period of improvement.</li> </ul>
Below 80%	75% = 38 days, 250 lessons missed	<p><b>Stage Three Intervention</b></p> <p>You must report any absences via Studybugs or phone before 9am. Appointments should be made out of school time.</p> <p>When all attempts to engage with the family at intervention stages 1 and 2 have failed, and the criteria has been met, the school will refer to Bradford Council to undertake a Stage 3 Intervention, which initiates a criminal investigation in line with the Criminal Investigation Process.</p> <p>School will continue to support the family.</p>

**Stage One – School Attendance Staged Intervention Model**







