



Pedmore
High School
Aspire, Persevere, Succeed

Attendance Policy



Pedmore
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Part of

INVICTUS

Education Trust

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Our Mission, Vision and Values



Mission

'Excellence every day, unlimited ambition and transforming lives'



Vision

'To create a community of inclusive schools where people choose to learn with us, work with us and belong with us, so that everyone succeeds'



Values

- Respect
- Resilience
- Relationships

1. Aims

We are ambitious for all our students and recognise the direct correlation between good attendance and achieving positive outcomes. It is recognised that attending school regularly can be a protective factor for children and young people. It is important that we offer a safe environment, positive relationships, high quality teaching and learning opportunities to develop social and emotional skills.

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of 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 make sure 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 is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

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 governance board

The governance board (Trust Board for the Trust and Local Academy Committee for schools) is responsible for:

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- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual children
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising Attendance Officer to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for children with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where children with SEND face in-school barriers
- Ensuring senior leaders with responsibility for vulnerable children, monitor and implement programmes of care and are ambitious for all our children despite personal challenges.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

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3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or 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 Andy Fisher and can be contacted via afisher@pedmorehighschool.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Following the four stage attendance process and ensuring letters are sent out which are timely
- 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 headteacher/Assistant Headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Abbie Hammond and can be contacted via ahammond@pedmorehighschool.uk.

3.5 Form tutors

Form tutors/Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office by 09:00 for AM sessions and by 13:50 for PM sessions.

3.6 School admin/office staff

School [admin/office] staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the head of year where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every timetabled session on time
- 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

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- Adhere to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the relevant head of year who can be contacted via info@pedmorehighschool.uk

3.8 Children

Children are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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 I for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made. The school day starts at 08:45 and ends at 15:15.

Children must arrive in school by 08:40 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:45 and will be kept open until 09:10. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:35 and will be kept open until 14:05.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09:00 or as soon as practically possible, by calling the attendance line, who can be contacted via extension 718 or by emailing attendance@pedmorehighschool.uk.

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.

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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 will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents are requested to contact our Attendance Officer for a form to complete. This should be done as soon as possible.

However, we encourage parents 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 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

Students will be marked late after

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:

- Send a message to 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 call the parents.
- 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(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on day 2 and 3 of absence without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues for days 4-6, the school will undertake a home visit to do a welfare check on the child. The school will consider involving an education welfare officer or police if student is not seen and is a cause for concern. On day 6 an Attendance Concern Meeting Invitation is sent to parents/carers. On day 10 of continued absence an ASP will be made by HOY.
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. The parents/ carers are notified via letter when students fall below 90% attendance.

If the attendance persists to fall following this the parents will then receive a Level 2 Attendance concern letter.

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If a student hits 6 days continuous absence or their attendance is a cause for concern, they are invited for an Attendance Meeting with their HOY and Attendance Officer to offer support.

Home visits are also scheduled between day 4-6 of absence in order to undergo welfare check and speak to parents face to face regarding concerns.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- 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.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background 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, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via emailing attendance@pedmorehighschool.uk or by collecting a hard copy via the Attendance Office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health 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 parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) 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
- If the child is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Other reasons the school may allow a child to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
 - Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
 - Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
 - Attending provision arranged by the local authority
 - Attending work experience

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- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £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 the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

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 suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

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They will include:

- Details of the child's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- School celebrates good attendance in assemblies and on displays.
- Promotion in tutor time
- Phone calls to parents through tutors and attendance officer
- Promotion of attendance alongside our rewards offer
- Weekly push within the newsletter to parents
- Letters sent to parents promoting the benefits of attending school
- Weekly home visits and calls

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Children absent due to complex barriers to attendance

- Attendance support plans put in place identifying support from school and agencies if required.
- Use of modified timetables and our Student Support Centre
- Key agency support
- Support and liaison with medical professionals
- Liaison with alternative provisions
- Pastoral care team and key workers identified
- Home visits completed weekly

7.2 Children absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Where a child has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the child's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Set out your approach to supporting pupils back into school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence.

8. Attendance monitoring

(Flow chart page 14)

The Attendance officer monitors continuous absence daily via logging on a spreadsheet along with any reasons given and follow up actions undertaken by Attendance officer.

If a student is within the 2 day absence section of the spreadsheet their tutor teacher will make a welfare call to try to support and gain further insight into the absence.

If students move into day 3 absence the Attendance Officer then calls parents/carers to ascertain further information and give advice if needed.

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Should a student reach 4+ days of continuous absence then a home visit is undertaken for the welfare of the child. If a student reaches day 6 of continuous absence then an invitation for a meeting with HOY/Attendance Officer is sent via post whereby an ASP can be generated.

After day 10 of absence the school will look at each individual case and generate a plan regarding further actions and may refer to ESS.

For REPS absence the Attendance officer sends weekly report to HOY's to identify students with attendance 93-90% and below 90% in order to implement strategies with Attendance team to prevent further absences. Furthermore, a half termly RAG rating is generated for each student to identify emerging patterns of attendance figures.

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific child information will be shared with the DfE on request.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to Heads of Year to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 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. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

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The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed in accordance to guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum will be updated every 2 years by the Trust lead for safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. The policy will be approved in accordance to the Trust policy schedule.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Positive conduct policy.

11. Appendices

Safe and Well Home Visits Flowchart

Pedmore Attendance Flow Chart

This is the action taken when no communication is received from parents/carers.

Day 1 - of absence and every day afterwards – text sent to parent advising of absence and asking to ring school

Phone calls made following no communication received day 1 and 2 Including attempts to all contacts



Day 3 - ring all contacts - no communication received

DSL /HOY informed and home visit made if required



Day 4 -6 Further call made by HOY
home visits conducted
Contact made to any sibling schools



Day 6 – send letter out to invite parents in for meeting with HOY/AFR/HES on what would be day 10 posted via home visit



Day 10 – meeting day - if parent/carer is no show and we have still not received any communication or the student has not returned to school then an EIS referral is made as a CME.

(Criteria for referring a CME is where a child has failed to attend school for 10 or more continuous days and the school has been unable to locate the child at their last known address)