
Attendance Policy 2025/26



Kindness



Focus



Creativity



Responsibility



Collaboration

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Aims of this Policy:

At New Wave Federation, 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;
- Working with external agencies to support and encourage families to attend regularly.

Legislation & 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](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The New Wave 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.

3.2 The headteachers

The headteachers are responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school;
- Building strong relationships with families, seeking to understand the barriers to attendance and working with families to help remove these;
- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly;
- Making sure all staff remain consistent and receive the training and development they need;
- 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.

3.3 The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance

The designated senior leaders in each school are responsible for:

- 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.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance in each school is the Headteacher.

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 headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The attendance officers are: Pam Sealy (Grazebrook), Hannah Mahony (Shacklewell), Bilal Theodule (Woodberry Down), Harry Jones (Thomas Fairchild).

3.5 Classteachers

Classteachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

3.6 School office staff

School office 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 to the SLT in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time;
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am 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;
- Arrive at school by 8.55am every day;
- Catch up on any work that they have missed due to any lateness or days of absence.

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:

- 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.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken at [1.00pm for KS1 and 1.30pm for KS2] and will be kept open for 5 minutes.

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 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7).

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, or if the illness has lasted over three school days, 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.

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.

Parents must complete a request for authorised absence form, which they can get from the school office, and which is approved by the Headteacher.

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.

If a child is persistently late, a member of the SLT will set up a meeting with the child's family to discuss possible solutions, for example, the child joining the breakfast club provision. Where children are late for school and have missed lessons or parts of lessons, opportunities for them to complete any missed learning will be arranged.

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:

- Follow the First Day Calling protocol as outlined in Figure 1, which sets out how we;
- 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 will carry out a home visit and call the police if necessary;
- 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 an education welfare officer.

Registers need to be completed by 9.05 am. Any registers not completed should be referred to SLT.

Listen to calls, check emails and notes for any known absences. Double check if children are in school.

Collate information on lates, absences and Registers and create list of children absent with no known reason for absence.

Begin *first day calling* by calling first contact on SIMs.

Make contact with primary parent/carer .

Call contacts two and if needed, three and four. Attempt to establish a reason for absence.

No contact is possible.

IMPORTANT

Call each contact at least twice. If it is not possible to speak to someone, leave a message asking them to call the school ASAP.

Follow up by text.

If established, make note of reason for absence in register and who supplied the information.

If no contact is made, inform member of SLT immediately.

Name of School
Nominated Safeguarding Leads

Executive Headteacher
Headteacher
DSL

Link Governor

Greg Davies

First Response:
020 8356 5500
MASH@hackney.gov.uk

Out of Hours:
020 8356 2710

SLT to inform police/and or children's social care if whereabouts cannot be established.

SLT to carry out home visit to establish whereabouts of the child.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly school reports. Families whose attendance falls below 90% are invited to meet with a member of SLT every half term.

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, for example, when:

- grandparent or other close relative is seriously ill – and you must leave in an emergency;
- significant trauma in the family recently and a holiday will benefit the child – this must be backed up by a doctor's letter;
- a one-off, never to be repeated occasion that can only happen at that time, eg family wedding/funeral.

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, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- 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 belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' 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.

5.2 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 £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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At New Wave Federation, we work hard to reward and improve levels of attendance. We do this in following ways:

- Sharing attendance percentages with pupils in weekly assemblies;
- Rewarding pupils for 100% attendance or improved attendance levels;
- Sharing attendance percentages with families in termly reports;
- Engaging support from Hackney [Education Attendance Service \(EAS\)](#) where appropriate.

7. Attendance monitoring

Explain how your school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance. For example, how you tailor your approach to your context and the needs of particular cohorts of pupils.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level;
- Identify whether or not there are particular 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/form tutors], 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;
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school and/or the 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.

Summary:

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

The school will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners will work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. We believe that all pupils deserve to be at school regularly.

Policy Agreed	September 2025
Review date	September 2026

Appendix 1:

Mark	Type	Description
	Cancelled	Cancelled
#	Cancelled	Planned whole or partial school closure - not counted in possible attendances
/	Present	Present
?	Missing Mark	Precreation Mark
\	Present	Present (PM)
B	Educational Activity	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)
C	Authorised Absent	Other authorised circumstance
D	Cancelled	Dual registration
E	Authorised Absent	Excluded
F	Authorised Absent	Extended family holiday
G	Unauthorised Absent	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Authorised Absent	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Authorised Absent	Illness
J	Educational Activity	Interview
L	Present	Late before reg. closed
M	Authorised Absent	Medical/dental
N	Unauthorised Absent	No reason yet provided
O	Unauthorised Absent	Unauthorised absence
P	Educational Activity	Approved sporting activity
R	Authorised Absent	Religious observance
S	Authorised Absent	Study leave
T	Authorised Absent	Traveller absence
U	Unauthorised Absent	Late after reg. closed
V	Educational Activity	Educational visit
W	Educational Activity	Work experience
X	Cancelled	Non-comp school age absence
Y	Cancelled	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
Z	Cancelled	Pupil not yet on roll