

Delph Side Attendance Policy 2025-2026

At Delph Side we aim to instil a passion for learning that empowers our pupils to be successful and exceed expectation so that they develop into confident, caring individuals that are well equipped to take the future in their stride.

ENJOY

EMBRACE

EVOLVE

Introduction

We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Our target for each of our children is 96%.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided to parents/guardians.

Your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. This Policy sets out how together we will achieve this in line with our mission statement.

Why Regular Attendance is so important

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason.

How we encourage regular attendance

How we create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/guardians, pupils and all members of school staff.

As a school we will:

- Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school. Details on attendance shared via social media (website, Seesaw and Facebook).
- Report to you termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions as well as weekly raffle draws for 100% attendance, weekly class rewards.

- Carry out transition work with pupils moving between nursery and reception, and before leaving for high school.
- Provide an open-door policy offering support and advice on attendance matters.
- Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole-school attendance.
- Work collaboratively with local high schools and work within a cluster of FORWARD primary schools to share best practice.

As a responsible parent/guardian you will:

- Ensure your child attends school.
- Communicate with staff regarding any issues you may be experiencing with attendance.
- Ensure start and finish times are adhered to.
- Avoid any leave in term time.
- Actively support school's mission to improve attendance and punctuality.
- Where possible make "routine" appointments out of school hours.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us by 9am on each day of absence, either by phone or in person. **Please do NOT report absence through our Seesaw app or via email.**
- Provide valid, reasonable evidence or justification for each absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- Contact you on the first day of absence (First Day Response).
- Discuss reason for absence and request a call back for an update on the child's welfare and encourage a return to school as soon as the child is able.
- Home visit (please refer to home visit policy).
- We will check in with your child about their recent absence and support them to transition back into learning and into school life. This forms part of our holistic approach to supporting, safeguarding and nurturing our Delph Side pupils.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A child missing the start of the day can miss out in valuable time with their class teacher. It's likely they will miss class timetable and information for the for the day. Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.

The school day starts at **8:40am**.

Registers are completed at **9.05am**, but the expectation is for children to be in school and engaging with learning at **8.40am**.

Any child coming in after **9.05am** will be marked as late.

Arrival after **9.30am** will be classed as an unauthorised absence and contributes towards a poor attendance record.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, certain medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time.

Dental and Optical appointments may not be authorised when scheduled within the school day – and this remains at the discretion of the Attendance Team.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable.

Unauthorised absence can lead to the Authority issuing fines and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- Parents/guardians keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after 9.30am
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed with the attendance team

Parents/guardians should be aware that the decision whether to authorise an absence is made by the school who follow Local Authority (LCC) guidelines.

If there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents/guardians before an absence may be authorised. This may be in the form of an appointment card or similar.

We understand that not all cases of sickness are due to contagious illness. Therefore, the school will consider each case on its own merit. If it is suspected that the child's sickness is due to a non-infectious cause (e.g. anxiety, travel sickness, or other non-contagious factors), parents are encouraged to contact the school to discuss the circumstances, and a decision will be made accordingly.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. We will work with you and your child to understand barriers to attending and find a resolution together.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level can do considerable

damage to any child's educational prospects. We need your fullest support and co-operation to tackle this together.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of reaching will be addressed and parents/guardians will be informed of this immediately. In most cases parents/ carers will be invited to an attendance panel meeting along with the Attendance Team which may include our Attendance Governor or council representative.

Support may be offered by our Family Wellbeing Co-ordinator, working with the school's Attendance team and may be referred to Lancashire councils school attendance support team (SAST). All PA cases are also automatically made known to SAST.

If opportunities to improve attendance are not accepted by parents/guardians, whilst attendance continues to decline, school may refer the case to SAST, who may assign a family support worker.

Severe Absence (SA)

Severe absence is when a pupil misses 50% or more of their schooling across the school year.

Sometimes such absence may be due to, for example, a long-term medical condition preventing full attendance at school, though even in such circumstances the pupil is still entitled to a suitable full-time education. However, absence at this level will usually require more intensive support and intervention by the school and, if required, the local authority.

Leave in Term Time/Holidays

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time. In line with Local Authority (LCC) guidelines we may use fixed penalty notices for any unauthorised absences.

All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent/guardian of residence using the 'Request for leave of absence' available from the school office.

Leave in term time will **only** be agreed by us if the circumstance are deemed to be exceptional.

We must advise you that if your child is absent either side of your holiday date, we may request evidence of flight date and times.

If a pupil does not return to school on the expected date, enquiries will be initiated which may include a referral to the Children Missing Education Officer.

If there is continued absence without good reason, and the school **and** the Local Authority (LCC) have failed to identify the child's whereabouts then, in accordance with Regulation, the child's name may be removed from roll with no guarantee of re-admission.

Religious Absence

The school will authorise one day 'leave' per religious festival, e.g. Eid, but no more than 1 day in any one academic year. Parents/guardians must request this leave in advance.

Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if it is felt that exceptional circumstances apply.

Pupils who are unable to attend school for medical reasons

The school will work with parents and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health.

This may be in the form of reasonable adjustments, specific support or resources used within school, or by sourcing appropriate provision at another establishment.

Alternative provision and use of directions

There is a range of circumstances when pupils might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are:

- Pupils who have been permanently excluded or suspended for a period of more than 5 days.
- Pupils unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons.
- Pupils required to attend another venue for the purpose of improving behaviour, either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (via a managed move).

When a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written direction or notice informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend. Where a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for other reasons.

Fixed penalties

Fixed penalties are not limited to holiday leave. They also apply in cases of **persistent or severe absence**, where attendance falls below acceptable standards.

The following changes came into effect from **19th August 2024**, and must be enforced by education providers nationally.

- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after **19th August 2024** will be charged at a **new rate of £160 per parent per child**. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.
- The threshold at which a penalty notice **must be considered** is set at 10 sessions **(equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence** within a 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. **The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.**
- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).
- Only penalty notices issued for absences taking place **after 19th August 2024** will count towards the above thresholds.

We will contact parents at every stage of the process to offer support, provide updates and arrange meetings to improve attendance.

Roles and responsibilities for attendance

Attendance Lead:

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school.
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters.
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- Where there may be ambiguity regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence or to request further evidence to support the decision- making process.
- First day response: Contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided
- Update the attendance registers
- Regularly identify and monitor pupil, class and whole school attendance and punctuality levels, particularly that of vulnerable groups
- Regularly communicate pupil attendance and punctuality levels to parents
- Work with children and parents to remove barriers to regular and punctual attendance
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- Participate in training regarding school systems and procedures

Governors:

- Adopt the whole-school policy and review regularly
- Monitor the consistent implementation of the attendance policy
- Oversees action planning and best practice
- Set aspirational targets for improving the school's attendance figures
- Work with the Headteacher/Attendance to ensure the processes are equitable and consistent.

School Attendance Support Team (SAST):

Each school has a named contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can advise schools on attendance related matters, and with whom Targeting Support Meetings will be held. For mainstream nursery, primary and secondary schools this will be a School Attendance Support Worker (SASW); for special schools, short stay schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) this will be a School Attendance Consultant (SAC).

School Attendance Legal Team:

Following requests from schools for legal interventions when parents fail to ensure their children attend regularly, the School Attendance Legal Team undertakes enforcement processes, including penalty notices, prosecutions, parenting orders, education supervision orders and school attendance orders.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS Statutory Framework has been updated from **September 2025** and now includes a section on attendance.

Children in Nursey and Pre-school are expected to attend all of their scheduled sessions unless they are ill or there is an exceptional reason. Regular attendance supports children's development, wellbeing and readiness for school.

The EYFS Statutory Framework outlines that settings "must follow up on absence in a timely manner"

Parents are expected to follow our absence procedure and notify school on the first day of absence, stating the reason. Parents should keep the school informed if the absence continues beyond a day.

Telephone numbers and Seesaw usage

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times.

Contact information will be requested 3 times per year to ensure that school maintain up to date record.

We will also request the parents utilise the free Seesaw parent app in order to send and receive communications with school. **Seesaw is NOT to be used to report absences**, but direct communication between parents and staff can be achieved.

Summary

We believe every child deserves the best opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive. Consistent attendance is a key part of helping children reach their full potential.

When students attend school regularly, they build strong academic foundations, develop social skills, and prepare for future success.

Together, we can support our children's evolution into confident, capable learners by prioritising good attendance.

Attendance codes from September 2024

Present	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in an approved sporting activity
W	Attending approved work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Absent – leave of absence	
D	Dual registered at another school *
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school *
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes **
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of (LA) access arrangements *
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available *
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel *
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed *
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed *
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention *
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law *
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause *
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

* These codes are classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

** Code T only applies to a "mobile child"; see [DfE attendance guidance](#) for details.