



Attendance Policy

Aiming For Excellence

Status	Current
Maintenance	Pupil Welfare
Approval	Full Governing Board
Date Active	September 2026
Review Date	September 2027
Signed by	 Mrs E Hodge (Headteacher) – 20/08/2026
Senior Attendance Champion:	Emma Hodge
Lead attendance officer:	Lydia Kilshaw
Attendance officers:	Julie Handley Emmanuel Durkin Katy Branagan

Aiming for Excellent Attendance

At Devonshire Road Primary School, we aim to ‘provide a secure and nurturing environment in which children achieve, rise to challenges, learn and grow with pride and confidence.’ We recognise that our children need to have a good level of attendance order to achieve this, and to achieve their educational potential.

We aim to develop a whole school culture and ethos that values good attendance by:

- ✓ Fostering a happy, safe environment of belonging where education is valued
- ✓ Nurturing meaningful and purposeful relationships
- ✓ Promoting good attendance
- ✓ Working collaboratively to reduce absence
- ✓ Ensuring every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ✓ Identifying patterns of absence at an early stage and acting early to address these.
- ✓ Promoting excellent punctuality and supporting those pupils and families where there are barriers to arriving in school on time every day.

Devonshire Road Primary School is committed to promoting excellent attendance for every pupil while fulfilling our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will take a support-first approach: treating absence as a signal of need, listening to families, removing barriers and providing reasonable adjustments and targeted support so pupils with protected characteristics, SEND, medical needs, or other vulnerabilities can attend and thrive. We will apply this policy fairly and consistently and ensure no pupil is unlawfully disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic.

Working together to Improve Attendance

This policy is based directly on the Department for Education’s publication “Working Together to Improve Attendance” (DFE July 2026) which outlines statutory guidance for local authority schools in order for them to maintain high levels of attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all members of staff and members of the Governing Board at Devonshire Road Primary to foster a welcoming environment where all feel valued, seen and wanted. A sense of belonging is key to good attendance and all member of our community must strive to create this through all of their actions.

The Governing Board will:

- Ensure the school has a clear, published attendance policy that is tailored to the context of our school, and is reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that senior leaders prioritise attendance improvement and to report progress at governors’ meetings.

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Set the strategic direction and whole-school culture for attendance: high expectations, expectation that pupils attend full sessions, and that the school is a place pupils want to attend.
- Ensure staff know their individual roles within attendance and follow the school’s day-to-day attendance procedures (first-day calling, register completion, follow-up).
- Oversee decisions about formalising support and, where appropriate, seeking legal interventions (in line with the National Framework and after support has been exhausted).
- Report termly (or more often if required) on attendance trends, persistent and severe absence and the impact of attendance actions to the governing body.

Senior Attendance Champion will:

- Be the named contact for the local authority and for Targeting Support Meetings (TSMs) or Attendance Specialist Team.

- Use attendance data weekly to identify pupils, cohorts and patterns requiring action (including looked-after pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils eligible for PPG and EAL cohorts).
- Support appointments/meetings with families: attendance meetings, Attendance Contracts, Notices to Improve, and referrals for formal interventions when appropriate.
- Coordinate multi-agency working where barriers go beyond school (health, social care, voluntary sector).
- Line-manage attendance staff (attendance officer/family liaison) and ensure staff receive appropriate CPD.
- Monitor the effectiveness of attendance interventions.

Attendance officer(s) will:

- Maintain accurate morning and afternoon registers and complete any required data returns.
- Carry out first-day absence contact and daily follow-up for unexplained absence, logging reasons and next steps.
- Under direction of the Senior Attendance Champion, arrange and record home visits or welfare checks when applicable and safe to do so.
- Report to EIT any absences of children on a Child Protection Plan or are a Child Looked After (within their home)
- Log concerning/emerging attendance patterns to the Senior Attendance Champion via CPOMs.
- At specific points in the year, and/or in the case of hitting certain absence thresholds, share pre-agreed communications with parents/carers to notify them of attendance expectations
- Support the administration of initiating and monitoring fixed penalty notices for term-time holidays

Class staff will:

- Take registers accurately and on time for every session and record reasons for absence where known.
- Promote the benefits of regular attendance in class and with parents/carers at induction and parent/carer consultations.
- Celebrate good attendance and foster a sense of belonging, especially with focus children
- Raise concerns promptly with the attendance officer or Senior Attendance Champion where patterns of absence appear or where a pupil's engagement changes.
- Make reasonable classroom adjustments to support pupils with SEND and other barriers to attendance and discuss these with the SENDCo and attendance lead.

SENDCo will:

- Ensure pupils with SEND have reasonable adjustments recorded and applied where attendance is affected by their needs.
- Contribute to attendance plans and reintegration plans where absence relates to health, anxiety or SEN.
- Advise on whether adjustments are sufficient or whether alternative provision, phased reintegration or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) review is necessary to secure attendance.

Parents and carers will:

- Ensure their child attends every day when the school is open, on time and prepared to learn, and to contact the school promptly on the first day of absence giving the reason and expected return date.
- Work with the school to address barriers to attendance and engage with support offered (meetings, contracts, referrals).
- Provide medical evidence when requested for extended or frequent absences (as set out in the school policy).

Further information about the responsibilities of parents/carers, the school and the Local Authority can be found [here](#)

Our School Day

Doors open: 8:45am
Early Morning Task: 8:45-9:00am
Lessons begin: 9:00am

- ✓ Pupils are able to go to their classrooms from **8:45am** each morning via the appropriate year group entrance
- ✓ Early morning tasks (EMT) will be completed until registration at **9:00am**
- ✓ Doors and gates close at **9:00am**, pupils arriving after that time should enter through the main gate and report to the school office.
- ✓ Pupils arriving between **9:00 and 9:15am** will be recorded as 'late', this does not impact of percentage attendance, however, late marks are monitored closely and interventions may be implemented.
- ✓ Pupils arriving after **9:15am** will receive an unauthorised absence mark for that morning's session.

School Contacts

- ✓ report an absence by telephone (01204) 333614 or via the MCAS App.
- ✓ **Emma Hodge**, the Head Teacher, is the Senior Attendance Champion, responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school, this includes implementing interventions for those children who are persistently or severely absent. She can be contacted by telephone or email via the school office.
- ✓ **The school office** deals with the day-to-day processes for managing attendance, for example; home visits, complex reasons for absence, processes to follow up unexplained absence. They are responsible for monitoring the attendance of those children who are at risk of becoming persistently absent. The school office may also contact parents/carers to inform them of next steps following absences. The main office contact for attendance matters is **Lydia Kilshaw**. She can be contacted by telephone or email via the school, alternatively by email at kilshawl@devonshire.bolton.sch.uk.
- ✓ Class teachers and teaching assistants are available to support pupils and parents/carers who have a concern about attendance. They can be contacted at the cloakroom door at the end of the day or by telephone or email via the school office.

Celebrating Positive Attendance

At Devonshire Road Primary School we regularly celebrate good and outstanding attendance. It is expected that all pupils should attend school every day and arrive on time. Therefore, all children have a 100% attendance target.

There are many ways that the school celebrates good attendance:

- ✓ **Class based incentives** – awards for excellent attendance will be displayed proudly in class
- ✓ **Class of the Week** – each week, the class with the highest overall attendance are presented with a trophy during Celebration Assembly, they keep this for the week. Every child in that class will also receive a 'good attendance' pin badge
- ✓ **Termly Attendance Draw** – at the end of each term, children with 100% attendance for that term are put into a draw for a £50 gift voucher. Children with 97% attendance and above go into a draw for a £25 gift voucher.
- ✓ **Exceptional Attendance Award** – at the end of the academic year we take a close look at attendance of year 6 leavers, those with excellent attendance throughout their Devonshire Road Primary School life receive a prize.
- ✓ **Improved attendance** – certain "focus" children will receive bespoke rewards when they achieve the target set for them that term by the senior attendance champion.



Communication with Parents/Carers

We aim to have clear channels of communication in order to share school's attendance expectations and statutory guidance, celebrate good attendance, and also to address attendance concerns in a timely manner.

Communication will be clear, supportive and relatable through. We aim to achieve this by:

- ✓ Relating how absence has an impact on learning
- ✓ Reporting on days and lessons missed, rather than just percentages
- ✓ Being open and transparent about school's response to any perceived issues e.g. local health outbreaks

We communicate in a variety of ways:

- ✓ Comprehensive information on our school website
- ✓ Annual Meet the Teacher presentations and New Intake Meetings
- ✓ Parent/carer conferences (Autumn and Spring Term)
- ✓ End of year reports (Summer Term)
- ✓ Weekly newsletters
- ✓ Email any school, local or national updates
- ✓ Email or texts to individuals
- ✓ Telephone Calls to individuals
- ✓ Letters Home
- ✓ Face to Face discussions and meetings.

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Day to Day Procedures

Unplanned absences:

Parents/Carers:

- ✓ Ensure their child attends school every day and on time
- ✓ Contact school on 01204 333614 or via the MCAS APP by **9am** for any **unplanned** absences e.g. illness

Attendance officers:

- ✓ Text parents/carers by 9:20am for any child who is absent where a reason hasn't been provided
- ✓ Contact parent/carer by telephone where more information is needed around an absence, or where advice can be given regarding medical conditions and attendance.*
- ✓ Inform Early Intervention service, by 9:30am, if a child with a child protection plan, or is a child looked after, is absent
- ✓ At 10am, contact parent/carer by telephone if there has been no response to absence text. If there is no response at first, continue to ring at intervals and also try the other contacts on the child's list.
- ✓ Where there is still no contact by lunchtime, the lead attendance officer will liaise with the DSL to decide the next steps which may include a doorstep visit
- ✓ Welfare calls will be made in the afternoons to those children who have been absent for at least two days

**NB. If the authenticity of an absence is in doubt, the school may ask the parent/carer to provide evidence such as a doctor's note, a prescription, an appointment card. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is*

not satisfied about the authenticity of the absence, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified about this decision.

Planned absence:

The headteacher will only authorise a leave of absence if they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time a pupil is authorised to be absent for. Any application for authorised leave of absence should be submitted as soon as anticipated and before the absence. Any evidence should also be provided. Examples of valid requests for authorised absence may include (but not limited to): medical/dental appointments, music or sporting exams, certain competitions, visits to new school, a day of religious observance that is required to be done on that date, bereavements, attendance at a funeral.

- ✓ Where a child is classed as being persistently absent (i.e. attendance is below 90% already), the request for authorised absence is likely to be denied
- ✓ School **does not** authorise leave for holidays during term time
- ✓ We ask that parents/carers try, wherever possible, to book medical appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, pupils should be out of school for the minimum time possible and ideally towards the end of the day.

We recognise that parents/carers may still choose to take their children on term-time holidays even though this will be marked as unauthorised. Under DFE guidance, school has an obligation to notify the local authority of this unauthorised absence, and the absence may result in a fixed penalty note being issued. When you notify us of a planned unauthorised absence, our school's attendance officers will send a reminder to parents/carers of the implications of this absence. Full information on fixed penalty notices can be found below, and more information is available on our school website.

Interventions for concerning attendance

School leaders and governors regularly monitor school attendance data. Interventions will be put in place for any children about whom the school has attendance concerns. In the most part these interventions will be implemented for children with persistent (under 90%). However, it may be necessary to put interventions in place sooner where concerning patterns are emerging.

Types of interventions include:

1. Written notification sent to parents/carers to explain that their child's attendance has dipped.
2. Meeting in school with parents/carers to work through barriers and offer support.
 - a. Additional nurture support for children in school where needed
 - b. Celebration opportunities for improved attendance in school (e.g. sticker chart with incentives)
3. Attendance action support plans which are reviewed every 6 weeks
 - a. Sometimes it will be appropriate to involve other professional e.g. The School Nurse or Bolton Mental Health School Team
4. Notice to improve letter, with a review period of 3 weeks

When the above isn't having the desired impact, we will work with the Early Intervention Team (part of Bolton Safeguarding) and possibly initiate the following:

5. Fixed penalty notices
6. Parenting order
7. Education supervision order
8. School attendance order
9. Prosecution
10. Loss of school place

Penalty Notices

Parents and carers need to be aware that in some circumstances, the school must consider requesting that the Local Authority issues a penalty notice.

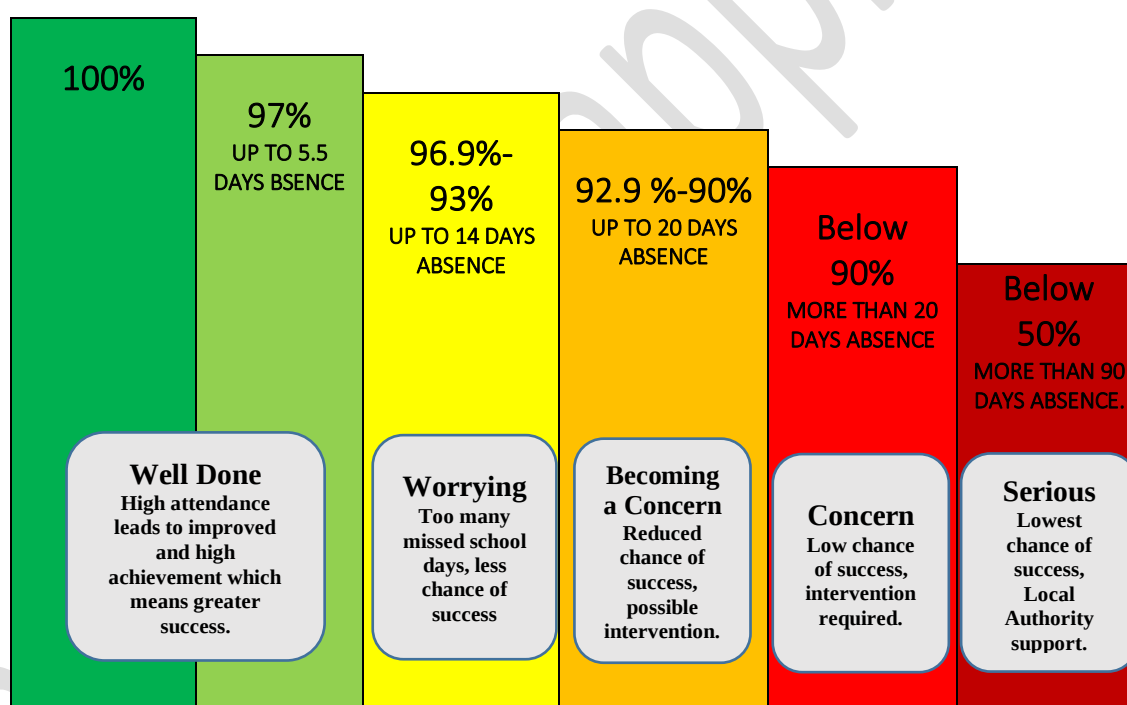
A penalty notice must be considered by a school where there are 5 or more days (10 sessions) of unauthorised attendance over a rolling 10 week period. This may include absences because of arriving late after the register is closed (a "U" mark).

A penalty notice is £80 per parent/carer per child. The fine goes up to £160 if it is not paid within 21 days.

For a second penalty issued to a parent/carer for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, the penalty will be charged at a higher rate of £160 and needs to be paid within 28 days.

More information about penalty notices and further legal intervention can be found in the DfE statutory guidance, [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).

How we Rate Attendance



Absence From School	How many lessons could be missed?		
	Attendance %	Days Missed	Lessons Missed
	95%	9 days	50 lessons
	90%	19 days	100 lessons
	85%	29 days	150 lessons
Children are required by law to attend school 190 days per year. The	80%	38 days	200 lessons

Government states that every pupil's attendance should be at least 95%.	75%	48 days	250 lessons
	70%	57 days	290 lessons
	65%	67 days	340 lessons

Legislation and Guidance

Devonshire Road Primary School attendance procedures meet the requirements of Department for Education Guidance and are developed following relevant legislation. The links below provide further information:

[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)

[School Attendance; Parental responsibility measures](#)

[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 \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)



Be Kind, Be Curious, Be the Best that you can Be!