Mayfield School

Attendance Policy

Believe. Achieve. Succeed.

Respectful, Resourceful, Responsible, Reflective, Resilient, Ready

Our School Vision

Our vision is to create a family ethos that raises aspirations and makes a real difference to the life chances of our young people

Our mission

All stakeholders, together, will create an environment of respect and inclusion where all young people are valued, supported, inspired and future ready.

Approved by: Full Governing Body	**Date:**
Review frequency: 2 years	**Statutory requirement:** Yes
Last reviewed:	**Next review due:** July 2023

1.   Rationale

At Mayfield School we recognise that for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including educational attainment and progress, wellbeing and wider life chances, good attendance at school is essential. Children who attend school regularly have better relationships and more consistent learning, thus they achieve more highly, making better progress and can develop higher self-confidence and esteem. The link between good attendance, standards of behaviour and attainment is clear.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special education need they may have. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional duty to ensure that their child attends that school regularly and on time.

Our school has a strong relationship with families, and we are committed to working in partnership to support parents and children who may experience any barriers to school attendance.

Therefore, ensuring good attendance and improving attendance is everyone's business.

Mayfield School fully supports Portsmouth City Council and the Portsmouth Education Partnership with the 'Miss School Miss Out' campaign.

2.   Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to regular good school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos, and relational practice, that values education and the life chances it enables, including:

> - Promoting the benefits that school attendance and education brings
> - Working collaboratively to maximise school 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
> - Listening to and understanding any barriers that families may face
> - Building strong relationships with families to ensure children and young people have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending school and lessons.

3.   Roles and responsibilities

Parents and carers
> - Make sure their child attends school every day/timetabled session and on time
> - Inform the school of any 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 up to date contact number for their child
> - Ensure that, where possible, medical or other non-urgent appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
>
> - Support the school with their child aiming for100% attendance every school year
> - Discuss with the school attendance officer, Mrs Sharon Rolfe, any potential planned absences to see if these can be avoided wherever possible

Class teachers/tutors
- ➢ Class teachers/tutors are responsible for recording attendance on SIMS registers accurately daily, using the correct codes, or submitting this information to Pupil Services where SIMS is not available
- ➢ Meet and greet children at the classroom door
- ➢ Promote and reward good/improved attendance with pupils at all opportunities
- ➢ Liaise with the Attendance Officer on matters of attendance and punctuality
- ➢ Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence with the Attendance Officer/Designated Safeguarding Lead
- ➢ Support pupils after any absence to engage with their learning when they are back in school

School office staff
- ➢ Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- ➢ Transfer calls from parents to Grace Newnham, Sharon Rolfe or Shanice Heywood in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- ➢ Ensure that pupils are accurately signed in/out during the school day
- ➢ Report any absences to the Attendance Officer by 9am

The attendance officer
- ➢ Check that registers match the absence information
- ➢ Monitor and analyse attendance data on at least a weekly basis
- ➢ Follow-up any non-attendance that is not accounted for on a daily basis
- ➢ Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- ➢ Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and report concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- ➢ Work with local authority staff and the Portsmouth Education Partnership to tackle and improve persistent absence
- ➢ Advise the headteacher when to consider referral for fixed-penalty notices
- ➢ The attendance officer is Sharon Rolfe and can be contacted via telephone on 02392 693432 or by email rolfe@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance
- ➢ Take the lead for attendance across the school
- ➢ Offer a clear vision to drive attendance improvement
- ➢ Evaluate and monitor attendance expectations and processes
- ➢ Have an oversight of data analysis
- ➢ Report attendance information to the Headteacher and Governors
- ➢ Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- ➢ Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- ➢ Deliver targeted intervention and support to children and families
- ➢ The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Fiona Rogers and can be contacted via telephone on 02392 693432 or email rogersf@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk

The headteacher
- ➢ Ensure implementation of this policy at the school
- ➢ Monitor school-level absence data and report it to governors regularly
- ➢ Support school staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- ➢ Monitor and evaluate the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- ➢ Make referrals for the issuing of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- ➢ Support the work of the Portsmouth Education partnership Behaviour and Attendance Group

The Governing Board
- ➢ Set high expectations for all leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- ➢ Promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- ➢ Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- ➢ Regularly review and challenge attendance data
- ➢ Monitor attendance figures for the whole school and groups of pupils
- ➢ Have oversight of staff training on attendance to ensure that it is regular and rigorous
- ➢ Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy via the Curriculum Governors.

4.   Attendance expectations and procedures

4.1 The 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

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 8:45am in year R to 6, 8:10am in years 7 to 8, 8:40am in years 9 to 11 and on each school day
- ➢ The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 9:15am
- ➢ The register for the second session will be taken at 12:35pm in seniors and 1:15pm in primary and will be kept open until 12:45pm in seniors and 1:25pm in primary

- ➢ The school day finishes at 3:00pm for seniors and 3:30pm for primary

The attendance register is a legal document and may be used in evidence in cases of prosecution for non-attendance.

4.2 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as an authorised absence as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. 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 planned absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. As headteachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is highly unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. Go to section 5 to find out examples of which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Leave of absence forms can be collected from the main reception or can be found online at https://mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk

4.3 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 on 02392 693432.

Parents may also report their child as absent via the StudyBugs app https://studybugs.com/.

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, 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.

Some pupils, such as those with long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, may face greater barriers to attendance than others. We will work with parents to still share high expectations for school attendance but also to offer additional support and make reasonable adjustments where necessary.

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 pupil arrives late after the register has closed for a session, the appropriate code applies to the whole of that session.

Lateness to school is logged on ClassCharts. Parents will also receive a letter each half term where punctuality is of concern. Senior pupils may be placed on a punctuality report for a period until this improves.

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:
  ➢ Contact 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 visit the home to ascertain where the child is
  ➢ 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
  ➢ Contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken. If absence continues, the school will take further advice e.g. contacting the local authority School Attendance Team, MASH.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers
The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels during parent/teacher meetings and in written reports.

4.7 Part-time timetables
All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

A part-time timetable will always be in place for the shortest time necessary and not treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full time, either at school or

alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents.

The local authority must be notified of any part-time timetables and the plan for return to full time education. They should never be open-ended. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat this absence as authorised.

4.8 Alternative provision

Any pupils who attend alternative provision are dual registered but remain the responsibility of the school. We will regularly check the attendance, behaviour and progress of dual registered pupils and raise any concerns about absence with the alternative provision and/or parents as necessary, in line with our safeguarding responsibilities.

5.   Authorised and unauthorised absence

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year. The Headteacher will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are 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.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering 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** (LOAF), accessible via https:// mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence and may contact the school of siblings in order to ensure that consistent decisions are made around leave of absence requests. If no explanation is received absences cannot be authorised.

There are two main categories of absences:

Authorised absence: when the school has accepted the explanation offered as a satisfactory reason for the absence, or approval has been given in advance. For example:
- Illness/sickness, medical appointment (medical evidence of appointment required), attending a funeral
- Religious circumstances (where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong)
- Participation in sporting competition, artistic performance, or examination
- Circumstance linked to parent in HM Armed Forces (MOD advice)
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes

Unauthorised absence: when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school following a parental request. This includes:
- parents giving their children permission to be absent from school e.g. shopping for uniform, birthdays, visiting other family members
- absences which have not been explained or a satisfactory explanation received

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information has been presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child has been unwell but on return to school there is compelling evidence that they have been on a family holiday.

If a child misses 6 sessions of school, their family will receive a medical 1 letter to raise awareness of school time being missed. (See appendix 2)

If a child misses 10 sessions of school, their family will receive a medical 2 letter to express concern about the level of absence. (See appendix 3)

If a child has more than 5 days (10 sessions) unauthorised absence in a term, then the matter will be referred to the local authority School Attendance Team for consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice fine.

Escalation of procedures
If we have had no contact from the parent/carer of a child who has missed two school days, we will visit the home in order to establish the whereabouts of the child. This includes those who are receiving offsite tuition from other educational providers.
If a child has below 50% attendance, our Home Family Link Worker will visit the home to offer support to the family and may make a referral to the Early Help Team.

If we are concerned about the safeguarding of any child, we will refer this to our Designated safeguarding Lead who will contact MASH.

Legal sanctions
The school through the 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 £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 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 authorisation
> ➢ Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
> ➢ If the payment has not made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6.   Strategies for promoting good attendance
We celebrate good attendance through our social media, in assemblies and on displays in school. Children are rewarded for having excellent attendance through certificates, letters home, prizes, medals, badges and reward events.
Our aim is to encourage families to ensure children regularly attend school.

We support families by:
> ➢ Providing information on the school website regarding absence related to illnesses
> ➢ Encouraging families to contact the Attendance Officer to listen to, understand and discuss any barriers, worries or concerns
> ➢ Inviting parents to come to our Attendance Surgeries which take place across the year
> ➢ Recognising there are other factors affecting children's attendance such as poor sleep, change in family circumstances, ongoing medical conditions etc.

> ➤ Providing access to Senco, Mental Health Support Team, Parenting Surgeries, Family Early Support, school nursing team, other agencies
> ➤ Engaging in city-wide priorities and initiatives such as the Portsmouth Education Partnership Education strategy and relational practice work

We promote good attendance at our school by:
> ➤ Ensuring that good attendance is everyone's business
> ➤ Incentives to encourage good attendance, such as stickers, certificates, medals, badges and rewards
> ➤ Aiming for 100% attendance and setting aspirational targets at a whole-school, year group, class and individual level
> ➤ Celebrating improved attendance
> ➤ Regular updates for parents and carers in newsletters and the school's channels of communication such as our website, Facebook and Instagram pages

7. Attendance data and monitoring

Attendance is monitored daily by the Attendance Team who then prioritise home visits based on this information.

Throughout the day, the Attendance Team will endeavour to make contact with the families of those children who have not given the school a reason for absence.

The House Teams receive weekly attendance data via StudyBugs and use this to promote attendance in assemblies and to speak to individual pupils about their attendance to school.

The Attendance Lead meets weekly with the Attendance Team to discuss concerns around specific children, year groups and vulnerable groups in order for those children to be targeted for communication home.

Pupils who are at risk of becoming persistently absent are invited to meet the Attendance Team and/or House Teams to discuss any barriers to attendance.

Analyses of attendance is presented to School Governors at every Full Governing Body Meeting.

7.1 Monitoring attendance
The school will:
> ➤ Monitor attendance and absence data daily, weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
> ➤ Identify whether 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

7.3 Using data to improve attendance
The school will:
➤ Provide regular attendance data via SIMS and StudyBugs to class teachers/ 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 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 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
➤ Offer the support of our Home Family Link Work
➤ Make referrals to Early Help where appropriate

8. Legislation and guidance
This policy meets the requirements of the DfE working together to improve school attendance (May 2022), 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.

9. Links with other policies/documentation
This policy specifically links to the following policy and/or documents:
➤ Child protection and safeguarding policy
➤ Behaviour and relationships policy
➤ DfE School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (May 2022)
➤ DfE Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities (May 2022)
➤ DfE Working together to improve school attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities (Published May 2022, Applies from Sept 2023)
➤ PCC Children Missing Education (CME) (Sept 2016)

➤ DfE Keeping Children safe in Education (Sept 2022)
➤ Ofsted School Inspection handbook (Sept 2022)

10. Policy monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by Fiona Rogers. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

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
Authorised absence		
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
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	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)

O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	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
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Medical 1 Letter

Dear

Re:

As part of our regular monitoring of school attendance it has been highlighted that your child has missed 6 sessions/3 days of school this term.

Regular attendance to school is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their progress, well-being, and greater life opportunities.

Whilst his/her attendance is not currently of major concern, as part of our attendance monitoring, we are required to notify parents when a student reaches 6 sessions of absence and to ensure that we are supporting you as much as possible.

We offer a regular attendance surgery on Wednesdays from 3.30-4.30 in the canteen, no appointment is necessary, should you wish to discuss any concerns you have.

We would of course prefer to work in partnership with you in order to ensure your child attends school on a regular basis and receives the maximum benefit from the education we provide.

If you would like to discuss the contents of this letter, please drop into the surgery or email:

For seniors - Mrs Rolfe on rolfe@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk

For primary – Miss Newnham newnham-grace@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk

Thank you in advance for your support with this.

Yours

Appendix 3: Medical 2 Letter

Dear

Re:

As part of our regular monitoring of school attendance it has been highlighted that … has missed 10 sessions/5 days of school this academic year.

Regular attendance to school is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their progress, well-being, and greater life opportunities.

We want to work with you as a family going forward, to offer any support we can which could improve your child's attendance.

As part of attendance monitoring, we are required to notify parents when a student reaches 10 sessions of absence. The purpose of this is to keep you informed of absences and work with you so that your child reaches their full potential.

At present we have authorised all of your child's absences where you have contacted the school to provide a reason. However, we are now required to ask you for more information to support any future absences relating to illness. This could be a copy of a prescription, a screen shot of a medical appointment, a receipt for over-the-counter medication or similar. **We do not require a note from your GP.**

We offer a regular attendance surgery on Wednesdays from 3.30-4.30 in the canteen, no appointment is necessary, should you wish to discuss any concerns you have.

If you would like to discuss the contents of this letter, please drop into the surgery or email:

For seniors - Mrs Rolfe on rolfe@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk
For primary – Miss Newnham newnham-grace@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk

Finally, it is important to note that if your child's absence is not marked as authorised and becomes irregular, we will need to inform the Local Authority who may consider that statutory proceedings, i.e. a fixed penalty notice, for irregular attendance may be issued. Therefore, it is essential that you let us know if you require any additional support from us as soon as possible.

We would of course prefer to work in partnership with you in order to ensure your child attends school on a regular basis and receives the maximum benefit from the education we provide.

Thank you in advance for your support with this.

Yours