



Attendance and Absence Policy

This policy was adopted/updated:	February 2018
This policy will be reviewed:	February 2020
Governor Committee Responsibility:	CFC
Statutory policy:	No

MAPLE INFANTS' SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE

~ TOGETHER WE LEARN AND GROW ~

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Contents

- Aims
- Legislation and guidance
- School attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing in Education
- School Procedures
- Authorised and unauthorised absence
- Attendance monitoring
- Roles and responsibilities
- Monitoring arrangements
- Links with other policies
- Appendix 1: attendance codes

AIMS

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence for all of our pupils from Nursery to Year 2
- Ensuring **every** pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

At Maple Infants' School we promote excellent attendance for all pupils in order to ensure that they reach their full potential. We encourage all of our pupils and families to share this ethos and we work together with parents in order to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality throughout our school.

EVERY DAY IS IMPORTANT

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Poor school attendance leaves pupils vulnerable to falling behind and children with poor attendance often achieve less in school.

Our school target for attendance is to be consistently above 96%.

We expect all families to ensure that their children attend school regularly and are on time.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [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.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, SAFEGUARDING AND CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

School attendance and punctuality is also monitored as part of the school's safeguarding procedures. In some cases, concerns regarding attendance and punctuality may be referred to the Single Point of Access team within the Local Authority.

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will report any children that go missing from education to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head Teacher, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than **5 school days**.

The attendance lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead work closely together to manage risks, ensure appropriate multi-agency engagement where necessary, so that children and young people receive the appropriate level of early help or statutory intervention to ensure they attend school regularly.

Any child who currently has a child protection plan who is absent at Maple Infants' School without explanation for **two days** will be referred to their key worker's Social Care team.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in Morning Nursery by no later than 8.45am and within the main school (Reception – Year 2) by no later than 8.55am on each school day. For pupils attending the Afternoon Nursery, they must arrive no later than 12.30pm.

Registers will be taken at these times.

Adding and removing a pupils name from attendance register

If a pupil no longer requires a place at Maple Infants' School then the parent must provide written confirmation regarding when the pupil will be leaving the school. Maple Infants' School will notify the local authority when we are about to remove a child's name from the school's admissions register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points. When removing a pupil's name the notification to the local authority must include; the full name of the pupils, the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, at least one telephone number of the parent, the pupils future address and destination school if applicable, the reason the pupil's name is being removed.

Maple Infants' School will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of a child jointly with the local authority before delegating the pupil's name from the register.

All schools must also notify the local authority within 5 days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register at a non-standard transition point. The notification must include all the details contained in the admission register for the new pupil. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is entered on the admission register at a standard transition point unless the local authority requests that such returns are made.

There may be occasions where the absence of pupils extends over a period of time. Should this be the case then a 20 day notice period will be provided to parents in writing and will inform them that

if the child does not return to school by a specific date that their child will be removed from the school role.

In addition to this notice period, parents of pupils whose attendance is low within our nursery may also be asked to improve attendance significantly or may be at risk from losing their child's nursery place.

Unplanned absence

Parents **must** notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence and the reason for this – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9am or as soon as practically possible.

Parents may telephone the school office (020 8399 3341) or email the office to report their child's absence office@maple.rbksch.org

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the child has to attend a hospital or therapy appointment evidence must be provided, and where possible, these should be arranged out of school time.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents 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 will be notified of this in advance.

Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

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.

Please contact the school office via telephone, email or in person to provide advanced notice for this type of absence.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. See Authorised and UnAuthorised Absence.

Lateness and punctuality

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to the individual pupil's learning and also to other pupils. It can also cause distress for the pupil arriving late. A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

- Registers close at 9.20am for Morning Nursery and 1.05pm for Afternoon Nursery
- Registers close at 9.30am for Reception, Year1 and Year 2

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

The school will make contact with any families where lateness is a concern and will seek to work in partnership with families to improve punctuality. Families may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer if lateness continues to be a concern.

Following up absence

The school will follow up **any** absences via telephone call, email or face to face to ascertain the reason for the absence. The school will also ensure that proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, and will identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If the school has not heard from the parent by 9.30am then we will start to call all of the contact numbers that have previously been provided in order to gain an explanation for the absence. If we still have not been able to ascertain where the child is then we will make a home visit. However

if we still haven't been able to get a response then we will report it to the police as the child will then be classed as a missing child.

Reporting to parents

Maple Infants' School will inform families in writing if their child's attendance falls below 90%. Attendance will continue to be monitored and if there is no improvement, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher. Should attendance continue to cause a concern, the school will make a referral to the Education Welfare Officer.

The school will also report every child's attendance in the summer term via the pupils' annual written reports.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Granting approval for term-time absence

The Head Teacher will not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be '**exceptional circumstances**'.

Applications for Leave of Absence must be made at least 2 weeks in advance, unless in emergency situations, and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorized.

If a pupil's attendance is already at or below 90% then any leave of absences, except for medical reasons, will automatically be unauthorised.

Exceptional circumstances are by their nature very hard to define. At Maple Infants' School each request is carefully considered and the Head Teacher decides whether exceptional circumstances can be identified. They are however considered to be unique one off events that cannot reasonably be carried out at any other time.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained
- 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
- Where there has been a family bereavement
- Where the school is satisfied that unavoidable circumstances prevented attendance, e.g. extreme weather conditions

Examples of unauthorised absence include;

- If a pupil is absent without prior notification and no explanation is provided for absence
- Where the absence could have been avoided
- term-time holidays

In the majority of cases a parents' note explaining that their child was ill can be accepted without question or concern. However, in exceptional circumstances further evidence of a child's illness may be requested.

Additional medical evidence may be requested when;

- attendance is less than 90%
- there are frequent odd days absence reported as illness

- the same reasons for absence are frequently repeated
- there is a particular medical issue and school may need evidence to seek advice

Frequent unauthorised absences will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

Please note that only absences relating to medical reasons or illness will be authorised during specific assessment periods for certain year groups. These are as follows;

- Year 2: the month of May due to end of key stage assessments
- Year 1: phonics screening week in June (and also any Year 2 pupils who did not take the phonic screening check or are required to re-take the check)

Strategies for promoting attendance

Maple Infants' school promotes good attendance through letters to parents recognising when attendance has improved, termly attendance awarded. Weekly attendance percentages are displayed within the entrance area of the school.

EDII – Every Day Is Important

Good attendance is also promoted with the children and termly attendance awards are presented for Outstanding (100%) and Excellent (99%) attendance. Our attendance mascot (EDII – Every Day Is Important) is also awarded to the class with the highest attendance every week.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Attendance is monitored regularly at Maple Infants' School.

The Education Welfare Officer meets regularly with the Head Teacher to monitor attendance with specific attention of any pupils whose attendance is 90% or lower.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

If a pupil's attendance rate falls below 90% parents will receive a letter advising them of the school's concern. Attendance will continue to be monitored and if there is no improvement parents will be invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher. Should attendance continue to cause a concern, the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer will be requested by the school. Individual attendance data and parent contact details will be shared with the EWO should a referral be necessary.

Data Analysis

The school collects and stores attendance data using the management information systems (SIMs). The school provides attendance data to the DFE, using SIMs to send data about the school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

The school uses the attendance data to identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and to track the attendance of individual pupils. Where attendance is a concern, the school will use data to analyse attendance by year group, classes, groups of pupils for example ethnicity or gender. The school uses attendance data to identify the main causes of absences within the school and to take action to address and improve those areas. The school use data to monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

The Children Families and Community Committee within the Governing Body are responsible for monitoring attendance figures every half term and data is shared with the full Governing Body termly. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Head Teacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The attendance officer (Office Manager)

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Class Teachers

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

Office Team

The Office Team are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Head Teacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Children, Families and Community Committee.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy and data protection policy.

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
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