

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy



Approved by Governors Date: STILL TO  
BE RATIFIED  
Review date: September 2026

## Introduction

Phoenix Primary School recognises the clear link between the attendance and achievement of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils to support learning and development.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%. ***As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.***

Phoenix Primary School believes all members of our school community have an important contribution in supporting and improving attendance and punctuality, ensuring pupils attend to achieve. This Policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

## Aims

- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality at Phoenix Primary School.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

**Promoting regular Attendance at Phoenix Primary School:**

This is everyone’s responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils. To help us all focus on this, Phoenix Primary School will ensure:

- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
- An appropriate curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly.
- Staff attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes school and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
- Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged and Looked After pupils and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- Appropriate interventions are in place to improve punctuality.
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/carers are kept informed of pupils’ attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with pupils in class and at assemblies.
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular incentives.

**Days off school add up to lost learning**

**175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR**  
**175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments**



## Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

### Expectations of Parent/Carer

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours.
- Contact school preferably by **8.45am** on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school. Always contact the school office to inform of absence rather than using Class Dojo or tapestry.
- If a phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the schools **Attendance lead** if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- **In case of emergency** we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of two emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays.

### If a pupil is absent we will

- Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by **9am**.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised a member of school staff will conduct a home visit when possible. If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with the family as soon as possible and a home visit will occur.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carer will be invited to meet the Pastoral and Attendance Officer.
- If absences persist the Pastoral and Attendance Officer will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.
- This will be monitored by the Headteacher with the Pastoral and Attendance Officer on a half termly basis.

### Understanding types of Absence

Phoenix Primary School has to record every absence that a pupil takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence and in writing on the pupil's return.

## **Authorised Absence**

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no evidence to support explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

Evidence to support explanation could include:

- A doctor's note
- A written note/email from the parent detailing the reasons for the absence.  
ao@phoenixprimaryschool.co.uk
- Show the Pastoral and Attendance Officer proof of prescription

## **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received adequate evidence to support a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

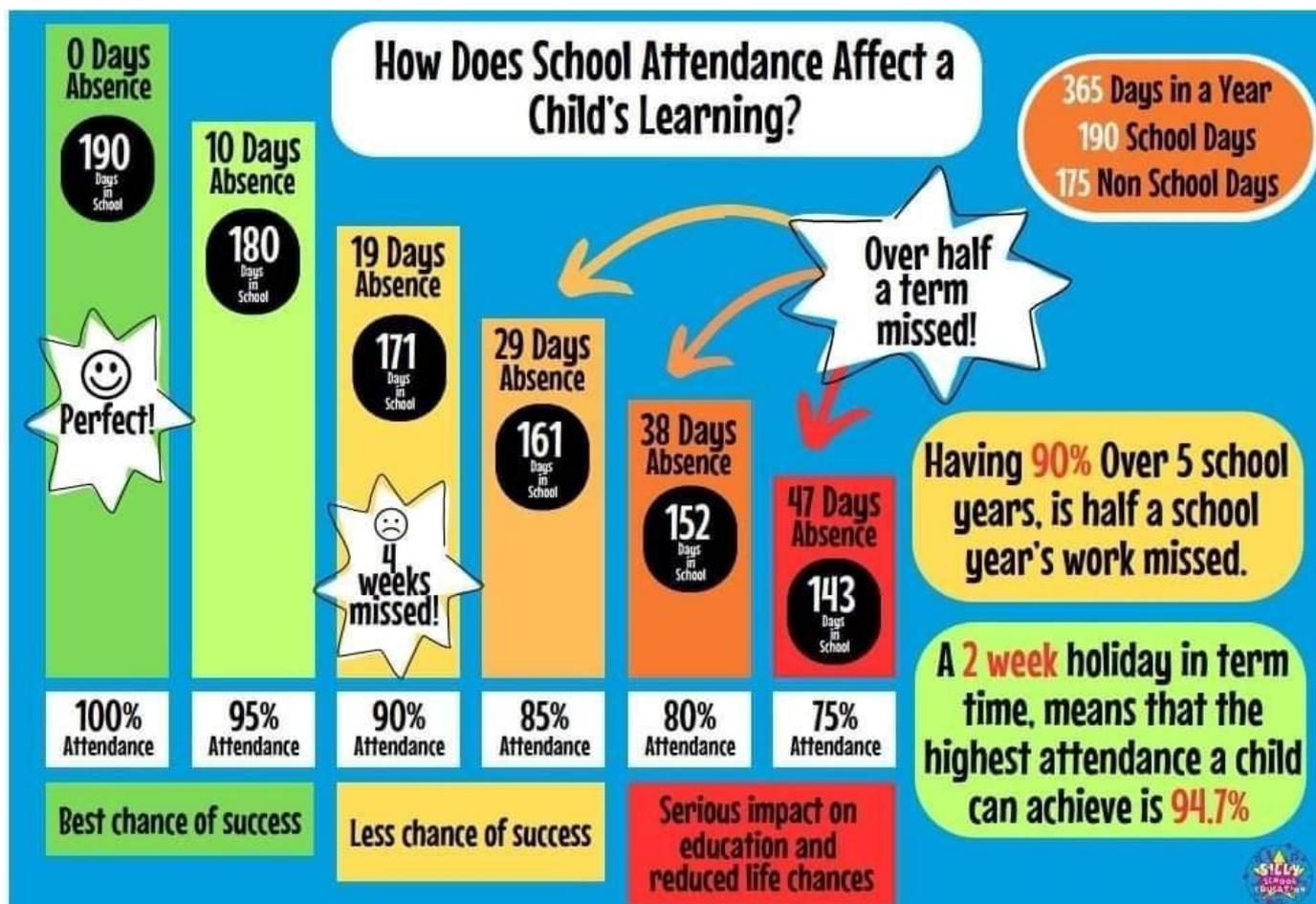
- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- Absences that have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school after 9.20am when registration closes.
- Where no written evidence to support explanation is provided.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. Phoenix Primary School can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 schools days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer to case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

## **Persistent Absence**

- The Department for Education (DFE) defines pupils as persistent absentees if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence. In line with this, Phoenix will intervene and support when attendance drops below 97%.
- Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.
- Parent/Carers are asked to contact the Attendance lead in the first instance.

## Why Regular Attendance is very important:



Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

- 90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

Pupils with an absence above 5 days will receive work sent home if appropriate. Pupils with a prolonged absence will have regular contact with SLT and/or class teacher and work set when appropriate.

A return to school interview will be held with SLT, Class teacher, parent and child and a plan of catch up will be set if necessary.

### The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

- The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carer and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school.
- The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and

where unauthorised absence persists the EWO will be required to give consideration to the instigation of legal proceedings which include; Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

### Leave of absence in Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

### Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

Parents/Carers will be required to sign their child(ren) in to school and provide a reason for lateness

### How we manage lateness

The school day starts and registers are taken at 8.50am by the class teacher and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. School recommends that pupils arrive by 8.45am.

Breakfast Club is open from 8am and school encourages all children to attend.

Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice.

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the Attendance and Pastoral Officer who will offer support to resolve the problem.



## People Responsible for Attendance Matters at Phoenix Primary School

All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support therefore is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success.

We have a school attendance contract that is agreed and signed by school, parents and pupil.

### **Removal from Roll**

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

### **As a school we are now required to:**

- Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register
- Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.
- Provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

- Give school comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing.
- If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a **child missing in education**. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Date of adoption: September 2025

Date of next review:  
September 2026

## Appendices – *working towards best practice*

### Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

#### Whole School Approach

When	Whom	ACTIONS Expected
	<b>Pupils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive on school site by 8.45am (Breakfast Club is at 8am)</li> <li>• Be in class on time for registration at 8.50am</li> </ul>
	<b>Class Teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registers are completed on SIMS each day on time</li> <li>• Ensure attendance has a high profile in class</li> <li>• Discuss absence with pupils returning to school</li> <li>• Welcoming long-term absentees back into the class</li> </ul>
	<b>Attendance and pastoral officer/Office Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers</li> <li>• Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks in the register via SIMS</li> <li>• Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason</li> <li>• Log on SIMS, parental voicemails, face to face messages and emails regarding student absences</li> <li>• Ensure all Late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is entered on to SIMS</li> <li>• SIMS in touch messages sent to parent/carers who have failed to contact regarding their child's absence and also pupils who arrive late.</li> <li>• First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no phone call has been returned.</li> <li>• SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required</li> <li>• Supporting staff with registration queries, support the interventions of the class teachers.</li> <li>• Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits</li> <li>• Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the First Day contact systems.</li> <li>• Daily Late process, log and send actions for relevant staff.</li> <li>• Complete home visits if necessary.</li> </ul>

When	Whom	ACTIONS Expected
WEEKLY	<b>Class teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all members of the class know the school target and their current attendance</li> <li>• Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by making contact with parent/carers where appropriate.</li> <li>• Organise help for pupils to catch up on missed work due to prolonged absence</li> </ul>
	<b>Attendance and Pastoral Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informing EWO of pupil patterns of absence.</li> <li>• Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for class teachers and pupil rewards</li> <li>• Discuss punctuality issues with identified pupils and parent/carers</li> <li>• Pupils rewards</li> <li>• Monitoring and Tracking of staff not completing registers in line with safeguarding requirements.</li> <li>• Liaison with Headteacher and Home School Link Worker regarding support work with identified pupils and their families.</li> <li>• Update information on attendance boards</li> <li>• Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement</li> <li>• Use attendance data to identify and take action to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils</li> <li>• Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy</li> <li>• Ensure that attendance features in ALL parents evenings</li> <li>• Monitor and track attendance/PA Action Plans</li> <li>• Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other pupils causing concern</li> <li>• The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those at off site provision</li> <li>• School Attendance Review alongside the EWO</li> <li>• Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to SLT, for plans to raise attendance</li> <li>• Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and that systems are operating effectively.</li> <li>• Report to SLT on attendance matters</li> <li>• Ensure school prospectus, parent/carers welcome booklet and school newsletters promote Attendance</li> </ul>
	<b>Head Teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors</li> </ul>

**Support - Support – Challenge Model to improve attendance.**

<p><b>UNIVERSAL</b></p>	<p><b>Culture and Ethos of the school</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>High expectation of 97%+ attendance for all pupils</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Celebration Assemblies</b></li>   <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rewards and incentives</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Extra 10 minutes playtime for best class attendance every week.</b></p> <p><b>Best class attendance per half term small reward in class.</b></p> <p><b>Best class attendance at end of the term is an out of school reward.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All staff supporting/promoting and recognising good attendance</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Responsibility of all staff</b></p>
-------------------------	---	---



<p><b><u>Support 1</u></b></p>	<p><b>Daily First Response to attendance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>o Daily problem solving for parents/families</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Communication with parents daily</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Invites to Support Meeting 1</b></li> <li><b>o Identification of issues</b></li> <li><b>o Problem solving for parents/families</b></li> <li><b>o Signposting parents for further support</b></li> <li><b>o Preventative meetings for children who have previously been Persistently Absent (to avoid 'drift').</b></li> <li><b>o Further raise aware of the school's high expectation of 97% attendance for all pupils</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Responsibility of Attendance and Pastoral Officer.</b></p>
--------------------------------	--	--



<b><u>Support 2</u></b>	<b>SUPPORT 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possible referrals to external agencies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Invites to Support Meeting 2</li> <li>o Assess the impact of actions from Support Meeting 1</li> <li>o Identification of further issues</li> <li>o Problem solving for parents/families</li> <li>o Re-affirm parent's awareness of the school's high expectation of 97% attendance for all pupils</li> <li>o Inform parents of possible next steps</li> </ul>	<b>Responsibility of Attendance and Pastoral Officer.</b>
-------------------------	--	---



<b><u>Challenge</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Invites to Challenge Meeting with attendance lead to inform of potential next steps if there is no improvement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Discussions with Education Welfare Service</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possible referral to Educational Welfare Service</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 20 Day Monitoring Period letters issue</li> </ul>	<b>Responsibility of Attendance and Pastoral Officer.</b>
-------------------------	--	---



<b><u>Education Welfare Service</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Education Welfare Service Involvement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possible legal action if attendance does not show sustained improvements</li> </ul>	<b>Responsibility of Attendance and Pastoral Officer.</b>  <b>Education Welfare Service.</b> <b>Deputy Head/Head Teacher</b>
---	---	---

Attendance drops below 97%  
Warning letter sent out  
Monitored by school



If further absences school to contact home and arrange an attendance meeting.  
EWO to be informed.  
Penalty Notice Warning letter may be sent.  
Improvement monitored by school and EWO



If attendance drops to below 90% then a referral is made to EWO for intervention.  
Attendance Surgery held  
Penalty Notice Warning letter sent.  
Legal proceedings implemented if necessary.  
Improvement monitored by school and EWO