

Attendance & Absence Policy

Head Teacher: Rebekah Alsey

Chair of Governors: Louise Bleatham



Tadley Primary School
Learning for Life

Date: Autumn 2024
Review Date: Spring 2026

Our Vision

At Tadley Community Primary School, we are passionate about equipping our children with the personal characteristics and educational outcomes for their successful futures. Our vision for each child is to develop an active curiosity of their world, discover their own interests and talents, and grow in their own confidence and love of learning. We do this by providing children with an irresistible invitation to learn through our knowledge-rich and diverse curriculum.

Learning for Life the Tadley Way!
Pride, Kindness, Diversity, Community

Introduction & Aim of the Policy

At Tadley Community Primary School we believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is also a [wide range of evidence](#) as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school-age education. [Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors/trustees to:

- Promote good attendance, enabling pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences, acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- Promote positive support systems and advocate multi-agency approaches to improve attendance.
- Make parents aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation.

The Legal Framework

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents and carers are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A "Parent" is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not.
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Roles and Responsibilities

At Tadley Community Primary School, we believe that improving school attendance is everyone's business. It is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, the wider school community and multi-agency partners. We aim to always work in partnership with our parents.

Role	Named Person	Contact Details
Senior Attendance Lead/Champion	Frances Ebenezer	School Office: 0118 9813805 adminoffice@tadley.hants.sch.uk
Attendance Officer	Gail Thompson	
Head Teacher	Rebekah Alsey	
SENCO	Amelia Mohain	
Pastoral Team	Lana Knapp & Charlotte Martyn	
Governor	Jeff Maidment	

The Governors will:

The Governors of Tadley Community Primary School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it through the school's ethos and across its policies. They may take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded.
- Identifying a member of the governing body/trustee to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance.
- Prioritising attendance in strategies, such as raising attainment, behaviour and combatting bullying, special educational needs and disabilities, wellbeing, and safeguarding.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent attendance support is provided for pupils who require it most by prioritising the staff and resources needed. This includes ensuring schools engage and work effectively with the local authority School Attendance Support Team and wider local partners and services.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker, those pupils under the Virtual School and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education in line with statutory reporting deadlines.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy, which is published and publicised regularly so that it is easily accessible to pupils, parents and staff.

The Senior Leadership Team at Tadley Community Primary School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form and maintain positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences, with a whole school culture that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Make sure all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand. Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure the school have accurate, complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Ensure that there is a named Senior Attendance Champion to lead on attendance and allocate

sufficient time and resource.

- Attend the termly school attendance supporting meetings with the local authority, focusing on those pupils with severe absence, making sure a regularly reviewed plan is in place.

All staff at Tadley Community Primary School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.

The member of staff responsible for attendance will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support.

Tadley Community Primary School requests that parents:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instill the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Further information can be found at: [Attendance guidance for parents | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/attendance-guidance-for-parents)

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or guardians to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen if a parent has not been in contact.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

Categorising Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department for Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

Leave of Absence

Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance mean that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours. All absences associated with a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority for prosecution.

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances. At Tadley Primary School, leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances. Tadley Primary School respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave (see Appendix 1). If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher, and it will be marked as unauthorised. Tadley Community Primary School will treat each application individually and discuss with you the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority should: -

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

The 1996 Education Act also sets out the circumstances in which a pupil has not failed to attend school regularly and therefore the parent has not committed an offence.

4.2, 4.3, 4.4 are examples of these. The full list is in the Appendix 5.

Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must provide evidence of this e.g., an appointment letter. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation

and without being collected by a safe adult.

In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent. We will invite parents to attend a support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral to the School Nursing Team and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and Hampshire policies regarding supporting children with health issues, [Behaviour and attendance resources for schools | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#). We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

Pupil Absences for the purpose of Religious Observance

Tadley Community Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school. [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) page 86

Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday.
- Shopping for uniforms.
- Inadequate clothing for school.
- Child being used as a carer.
- Transport problems.
- Sickness of a parent, or other family member.
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair.
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes.
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family

organisation.

- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend.
- Absences taken without the authorisation of the school.
- Family holiday.
- Relatives coming to visit.
- Family weddings for more than 1 day.
- Absence taken without authorisation of the school.
- Extending the time off if a pupil has not come back to school after an agreed absence.

Procedures Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for Sports and Competitions and Absence through child participating in Public Performances, including theatre, film or TV work and Modelling

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions or public performances. It is however, down to the headteacher's discretion whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Head teacher and are not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association are providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

Our Procedures

Register Keeping and Recording

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school

“Regular” attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorized.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm (EYFS) and 1.15pm (KS1 and KS2) and will be kept open until 1.05pm (EYFS) and 1.20pm (KS1 and KS2).

Registers are legal records, and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date the data was entered. As the attendance register is a record of the pupils present at the time it was taken, the register should only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, all schools must ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended

entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment. On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for every pupil (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) whose name is listed in the admission register at the time.

The codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the government gain a greater understanding of the delivery of education and the level of, and reason for, absence.

Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels on a half-termly basis.

Late Arrival at School

At Tadley Community Primary School all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. The school day begins at 8.50am. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this. School doors will open at 8.40am, you can arrive onsite prior to this and wait on the playground for the doors to open. The school register will be taken at 8.50am. All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parents/carer/whoever brought them to school, who will be expected to sign the late book and provide a reason for their absence. If their arrival is before 9.20am it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

The school register will officially close at 9.20am All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution

Registers are legal records, and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 6 years from the date the data was entered. As the attendance register is a record of the pupils present at the time it was taken, the register should only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, all schools must ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment.

Expected absence procedure for parents:

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

If a child is absent, the following actions will be initiated by the school:

Action	Criteria	Outcome
First Day Calling Procedure	Pupil is not in school after the register closes at 9:20 am No reason for absence provided	Phone call will be made to parents/carers to check the reason for absence

Follow-up Call	No contact has been made by parents/guardians No response to the initial call	Second phone call will be made later that morning to follow up
Emergency Contact Call	No response from parents/carers after multiple attempts Emergency contact available	The child's emergency contact will be telephoned for an update
Home Visit	No contact with parents/carers or emergency contact Continued unexplained absence	A home visit may be conducted to ensure the safety and welfare of the child
Unauthorised School Departure	Pupil leaves school premises without permission	Phone call will immediately be made to inform the parents/carers

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil.
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Refer to Inclusion Support Service for support, guidance, and advice.
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through [Inclusion Support Service \(ISS\) | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/inclusion-support-service) and [Behaviour and attendance resources for schools | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/behaviour-and-attendance-resources-for-schools)
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorized leave of absence has been taken.
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or consulting with the Children's Social Care or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns.

Attendance Rewards and Interventions:

Tadley Community Primary School fosters a positive attitude toward attendance among staff, pupils, and parents while actively monitoring and managing poor attendance. This is achieved through:

- **Regular Communication:** Informing parents of the importance of good attendance via newsletters, emails, and meetings. School start times and expectations are clearly communicated to reinforce punctuality and regular attendance.
- **Attendance Awards:** Recognising classes and pupils with high attendance through initiatives such as weekly stars for classes with over 96% attendance. Classes that earn 6 stars enjoy a movie afternoon. Pupils with over 96% attendance or improved attendance receive certificates, stickers, and entry into a raffle for different prizes each half term.
- **Parental Engagement:** Collaborating with parents to address barriers to attendance, offering support as needed. Parents may be involved in setting goals or creating attendance improvement plans.
- **Monitoring and Intervention:** Regularly tracking attendance data to identify patterns and addressing concerns early with targeted interventions.

Additionally, the school will:

- **Monitor and Analyse Attendance:** Weekly analysis of attendance patterns, including individual pupils, cohorts, and year groups (considering punctuality), to deliver targeted support.
- **Provide Attendance Reports:** Sharing attendance reports with teachers, leaders (SEN coordinators, safeguarding leads, pupil premium leads), and class tutors for discussions and interventions.
- **Frequent Individual Analysis:** Conducting individual-level analysis to identify pupils needing support and focusing efforts on tailored interventions.
- **Data Analysis:** Thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to spot patterns, including use of codes, days of poor attendance, and subjects with low attendance.
- **Benchmarking:** Comparing school attendance data against local, regional, and national averages to identify areas for improvement.
- **Develop Strategies:** Creating strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through analysis.
- **Impact Monitoring:** Reviewing the effectiveness of school-wide attendance efforts and using data to refine strategies.
- **Reporting:** Providing attendance data and reports to the board, governing body, and local authorities as necessary.

At Tadley Community Primary School we will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent (PA) and will not wait until attendance is below 90%.

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason. “Severe absence” (SA) as:
- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

Support Systems

At Tadley Community Primary School we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family’s life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child’s attendance and/or behaviour in school, for example: bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

- Meeting with you to discuss your concerns around attendance.
- Discussing support that our pastoral team or SENCo may be able to provide, either to parents, children or both.
- Discussing support from external agencies, including support from Early Help Hub.

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child’s regular attendance. Support offered to families will be child-centered and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

Persistent Absence, Severe Absence and the use of legal interventions

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any

reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level could cause considerable damage to a child’s educational outcomes.

A pupil becomes a ‘severe absentee’ (SA) when their attendance drops to 50% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 190 sessions (95 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child’s educational outcomes.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above.

Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support. [Inclusion Support Service \(ISS\) | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/inclusion-support-service)

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution via the Magistrates’ Court.

Parents found guilty of failing to secure their child’s regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

In line with Hampshire County Council guidance, we will notify the Inclusion Support Service of all reduced timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed.

Steps the school will take to improve irregular attendance before issuing a penalty notice:

Tadley Community Primary will do its best to support attendance, but responsibility ultimately lies with parents/carers. If there are concerns about a child’s attendance, we will:

Action	Criteria	Outcome
Initial Concern Notification	Concerns about a child’s attendance are identified Attendance is below an acceptable threshold	Letter or email sent to parent’s/carers notifying them of the concern and offering support Verbal discussions recorded for reference
Supportive Meeting Invitation	Attendance does not improve or remains a concern after initial communication	Parents/carers are invited to a meeting to discuss the pupil’s needs and explore strategies to improve attendance
Notice to Improve Letter (10+ session absences within 100 sessions)	Attendance does not improve after the meeting Parents/carers do not engage in the process	"Notice to Improve" letter sent, giving a 3-week window for improvement before further action is taken
Escalation to Local Authority	Attendance does not improve within the 3-week period	Case referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice or

	Parents/carers fail to engage with interventions	prosecution Any safeguarding concerns are referred as per school policy
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Further information regarding Penalty Notices

This policy clearly states the need for excellent attendance at school, and the possible consequences for poor attendance. Further information, which is all part of the school's policy, can be found on [Attendance guidance for parents/carers | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#). In particular, it states that:

- If you receive two Penalty Notices in a rolling three-year period and your child has further unauthorised absences, legal action may be taken such as prosecution or an Education Supervision Order.
- It is no longer possible for the same parent to receive a third Penalty Notice for the same child in a three-year rolling period. If a third holiday is taken in this period, the school will refer to the Legal Intervention Team for consideration of a prosecution.
- If your child has an ongoing pattern of unauthorised absence then parents/carers will normally receive a written warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued or a Notice to Improve letter. This warning or Notice to Improve letter will advise parents/carers about the extent of their child's absence and warn them that if their child's attendance does not show a significant improvement and if this improvement is not maintained thereafter, a Penalty Notice may be issued without further warning.
- There is no statutory right of appeal. Once a Penalty Notice has been issued, it can only be withdrawn if it can be shown that it ought not to have been issued or was issued in error.
- When calculating the number of absences in a 100-session period, unauthorised absences do not need to be consecutive and can span different school terms and years.
- Penalty Notices are also intended to be used in tackling parentally condoned absence, where it is reasonable to expect that the parent can ensure the child's regular attendance, but s/he is not willing to take responsibility for doing so, e.g., where a parent is not co-operating with advice or support offered to help improve his or her child's attendance.

Related Policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential, the following policies are integral to this approach:

- Safeguarding including child protection.
- Admissions.
- Anti-bullying.
- Suspension and Exclusion.
- Special educational needs.
- Teaching and learning.
- Relationship and Behaviour Policy
- Pupil Premium Statement

Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, \(August 2024\)](#)

- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2024\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(July 2023\)](#)

Appendices

The following pages contain appendices relevant to this policy.

Appendix 1: Example leave of absence request form

Request to authorise absence from school due to exceptional circumstances

Schools are only able to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances. In making a request for an authorised absence from school you will need to explain why the circumstances are exceptional. Please note: There is no general right to authorised absence for a family holiday. If you take your child out of school without permission the absence will be unauthorised, and the local authority will consider legal action.

You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered.

Section A – to the headteacher, I wish to apply for

Child's name: _____ Class: _____

To be authorised as absent from school (please include dates and time):

from _____ to _____ (inclusive dates)

If your child has siblings that are also applying for a leave of absence, please enter their name and school below:

Child's name(s): _____ School(s): _____

Section B Please explain why you are applying for an authorised absence and the **circumstances** which make your **application exceptional**; and therefore, the leave cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks holiday your child has from school. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event, please confirm the date of the event and explain your travel arrangements. If you require additional space, please continue on the other side of the page.

Section C I am the parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides. The information I have given on this form is correct.

Signature (parent/carer): _____

Date: _____

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (headteacher) of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Section D – for school use only. Tick as appropriate.

Request approved for _____ number of days from the dates and times _____

A personal discussion with you is requested. Please contact _____

Request not approved as the circumstances are not considered to constitute an exceptional reason and/or the impact of this absence will affect your child's educational progress.

PLEASE NOTE: This leave of absence form serves as a Warning to parent/carer. Any unauthorised absence during this period may be subject to a Penalty Notice OR may result in a prosecution if two previous penalty notices have been issued in a rolling three-year period

A Penalty Notice may be issued per parent/carer, per child (i.e. if two parents have two children this may result in four Penalty Notices – two Penalty Notices per parent).

Headteacher: _____ Date: _____

Current attendance rate: _____

Continuation of section B (if required):

Appendix 2: Example reply to leave of absence request

Dear Parent's name,

RE: Absence during term time – Child Name (Child DOB)

Thank you for your application for absence in term time for Child's name. Whilst we appreciate your circumstances, Tadley Community Primary School do not approve any absences during term time unless they are due to exceptional circumstances as per the guidance from the Department of Education.

The rationale behind this decision is that the Government has provided evidence that satisfactory progress at school is highly dependent on attendance.

Tadley Community Primary School works closely with the Inclusion Support Service and if you choose to take your child out of school for the above unauthorised leave, we will notify the local authority and further action including legal action may be considered.

Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £80 which increases to £160 if not paid within the first 21 days. Thereafter if the Penalty remains unpaid after 28 days this may result in legal action be taken against you. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

I have noted the dates that Child Name will be absent from Tadley Community Primary School, Dates of leave and the registers will be marked with the G code (unauthorised family holiday) for this period.

If you would like to discuss the matter further, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

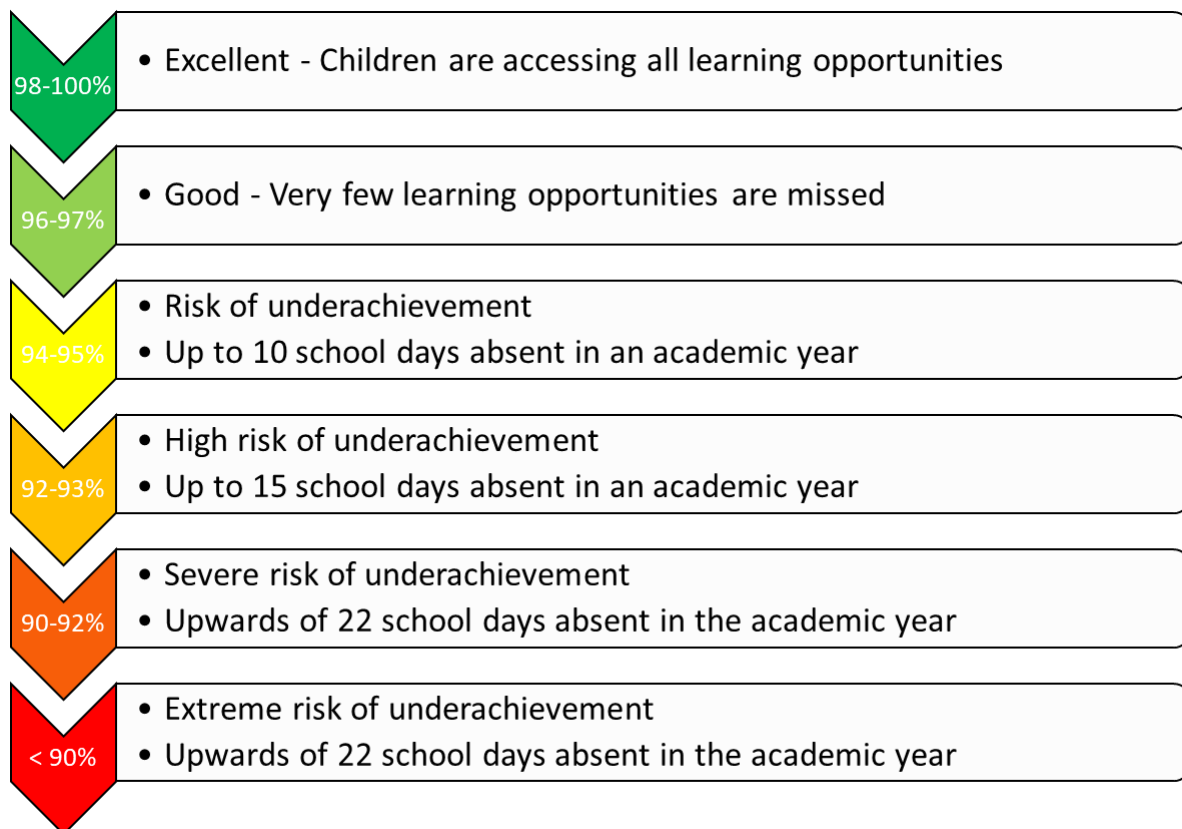
Appendix 3: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents

We expect pupils to attend school for 96%+ of the academic year.

You can support your child to have excellent attendance by taking these steps:

- Ensure your child arrives on time for school every day and is ready to learn. Arriving after registration is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Pupils must be in school by 8.50am.
- If your child appears to be only slightly unwell, send them in to school. We have staff who will contact you if their condition deteriorates.
- Book any medical appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable, please book for as late in the afternoon as possible and inform the school of appointments in advance.
- Supply a copy of the appointment card or hospital letter if your child has an appointment during school hours.

If your child becomes reluctant to go to school or you need help, please contact the school immediately; we are more likely to be able to work together to solve any problems if we act early.



‘On the day’ absence: what should I do if my child is not ‘fit’ to go into school?

On each day your child is unfit to come to school, please report this absence by phoning the school or emailing the school to let us know. In the message you must leave your child’s full name, year and class and give the specific reason for absence. The information you give will be recorded on our official register. Please do so before 8.30am.

Leave of Absence

There may be exceptional circumstances where you need to request a leave of absence for your child. Please use our ‘Leave of absence request’ form to make these types of requests. The form should be submitted in advance of the leave of absence. You will receive a letter in response, to advise if the request has been granted or declined.

Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive on time for school in the morning and for every lesson during the day. Your child is late to school if they are not in the building before the front door or gate closes at 8.50am. The school actively monitors punctuality, and if a pattern of lateness is identified, you will receive a letter offering support to improve this.

The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment. I hope we can count on your support in this matter.

Please contact the school if you require any support with ensuring your child's regular school attendance.

Appendix 4: Example letter about punctuality

Dear Parent/Carer of (Name of child)

Re: School Start Times and Lateness

We have identified that your child has been late _____ time/s for school in the last ____ school days.

We are writing to remind you of our school start times and the importance of punctuality, which plays a vital role in ensuring a smooth and calm start to the school day for all children.

Gates open at 8:40 am, and we ask that all children arrive promptly. It is essential that your child is in school and ready to start the day on time, as **registration begins at 8:50 am**.

Please note the entry points for different year groups:

- **Year R, Year 1, and Year 5:** Children should enter through the main school entrance.
- **Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, and Year 6:** Children should use the side gate to go directly to their classroom door.

For school security, **the side gate will be locked promptly at 8:50 am**. Any child arriving after this time should enter through the main entrance, where they will be marked as late.

While occasional delays are understandable, frequent lateness can significantly impact your child's learning and their ability to settle into the school day. We kindly ask for your support in ensuring your child arrives on time.

If lateness continues in the upcoming weeks, we will contact you again to discuss any support we can provide to reduce barriers to arriving on time.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in helping us provide a positive start to the school day for all children.

Kind regards,

Attendance Leader

Appendix 5: Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Students

Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Students

Roles and responsibilities:

All members of the school community at Tadley Community Primary School have roles and responsibilities in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality.

Role of the pupils:

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available.

All pupils will:

- Ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Be aware of their current attendance record and targets.
- Be aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy.
- Arrive to lessons punctually.
- Not leave school without permission.
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied or feel unhappy in school.

Appendix 6: Example Notice To Improve Attendance Letter

Dear [Parent/Carer Name],

Re: Notice to Improve Attendance for [Child's Name], [Year Group]

School attendance is extremely important. To ensure that your child gains the full benefit from their education—supporting their learning, wellbeing, and wider development—they must attend school on time, every day where possible.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, it is an offence for a parent/carers to fail to ensure regular attendance at school if a child of compulsory school age is a registered pupil. As the parent/carers of [Student's Name], a registered pupil at [School's Name], it is your legal duty to ensure their regular attendance.

To help address [Student's Name]'s attendance concerns, the school has previously offered the following support to you and your family:

1. **Daily Communication:** The school contacted you every day [Student's Name] was absent to understand the reasons and offer any support needed to help them return.
2. **Attendance Overview Letter:** A letter was sent to inform you of [Student's Name]'s current attendance, highlighting the potential impact of continued absence, and inviting further discussion with the school.
3. **Attendance Support Meeting:** A meeting was arranged to discuss the reasons behind your child's unauthorised absences and to offer further support to improve attendance. At this meeting, we also notified you of the consequences of continued unauthorised absence, and there was limited or no engagement with the offered support. **OR Attendance Support Meeting Invite:** The school invited you to a meeting to discuss the unauthorised absences and provide support, but unfortunately, you declined the meeting.

Despite these efforts, [Student's Name]'s attendance remains a significant concern. Between [Warning Start Date] and [Warning End Date] (a 10-week period), your child accrued 10 sessions (half-days) or more of unauthorised absences. Please see the attached registration certificate for more details.

You now have a 15-school-day (3-week) window to improve your child's attendance. During this time, [Student's Name] must demonstrate significant improvement, with no further unauthorised absences. Failure to meet this expectation may result in the issuance of a Penalty Notice.

A Penalty Notice carries a fine of £160 if paid within 28 days of service, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Be aware that the school reserves the right to issue a Penalty Notice upon recording any further unauthorised absences during this period. More information about this process is included in the attached document. Should you wish to discuss this matter further or explore additional support, please contact our team as soon as possible.

We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring [Student's Name]'s attendance improves and look forward to working together in the best interests of your child's education.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely,
Rebekah Alsey
Head Teacher

Appendix 7: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from Working Together to Improve 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 approved by the school. Schools must also record the nature of the approved educational activity.	Examples of nature of activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1) Attending taster days at college • 2) Attending courses at college • 3) Attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority. Schools must also record the nature of the provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending courses at college • Attending unregistered alternative provision such as, home tutoring
P	Sporting activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity
V	Educational visit or trip	An educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff
W	Attending work experience	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education

Code	Definition	Scenario
Absent – leave of absence		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance	Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part- time timetable	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
E	Excluded	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness
J1	Interview	Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
M	Medical appointment	Attending a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to
S	Study leave	Studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	

Code	Definition	Scenario
Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	This is linked to transport not other access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	The school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Adverse weather
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	In police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	An emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.

Code	Definition	Scenario
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	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	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given
U	Arrival after registration	A pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.

Code	Definition	Scenario
Administrative Codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.
#	Planned whole school closure	Whole school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day/use of whole school as polling station