Leeds Children's Services Model Attendance Policy Academic Year 2024 – 2025

This policy has been agreed by the Governing Body of
Pudsey Grammar School

Ratified: Student Support

Date approved: 23rd October 2024

Date of review: October 2025

Contents

This Attendance Policy is available on the school website and is reviewed and ratified annually by the governing body/board of trustees or as events or legislation requires. Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified will be remedied without delay.

Academic year	Headteacher	Senior Attendance Champion (SLT)	Nominated Governor Attendance	Chair of Governors
2024-25	Mark McKelvie	Paul Tierney	David Ryan	David Webster

Policy Review date	Date Ratified by governors	Date Shared with staff
October 2025	23rd October 2024	28th October 2024

School Name	Pudsey Grammar School
Attendance Target	Above National Figures
School opens at	8.30am
Registers close at	9.20am

1. Contact List – September 2024

Role / Agency	Name	Contact Details
Headteacher/Principal	Mark McKelvie	0113 2558277
Senior Attendance Champion SLT	Paul Tierney	0113 2558277
Attendance Officer	Sarah Bennett Kiran Nota	0113 3869122
Governor with responsibility for Attendance	David Ryan	0113 2558277
Chair Of Governors	David Webster	0113 2558277
School Office	Amy Powell	0113 2558277
School Attendance Service (SAS)	Queries relating to attendance	0113 3785994 Schoolattendanceservice@leeds.gov.uk
Elective Home Education (EHE)	Queries around Elective Home Education	EHE@leeds.gov.uk
Children Missing Education (CME)	Referrals for children missing education	0113 378 9686 CME@leeds.gov.uk
Education Safeguarding Team	Advice / Training / Safeguarding Audit	0113 3789685 estconsultation@leeds.gov.uk

Attendance Policy

2. Policy Statement

Pudsey Grammar School seeks to ensure that all its students receive an education which enables them to reach their full potential. There is a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Students who regularly attend school make much better progress socially and academically. Regular attendance enables students to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups.

Pudsey Grammar School aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure that every child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, we ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance for all students at Pudsey Grammar School .

We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parents and carers.

This attendance policy is part of broader suite of safeguarding policies and should not be viewed in isolation. Safeguarding policies include the Child Protection Policy, Anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy.

3. Aims

3.1 The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to Attendance and understand the correlation with safeguarding.
- Parents, carers, and students are informed about the procedures for attendance and take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Students who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year are recognised and rewarded.

3.2 The responsibilities set out in this policy apply (as appropriate) to all members of the school community including students, parents, staff, and governors. It is fully incorporated into the whole school ethos and culture.

4. Legislation and guidance

4.1 This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance, [Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)](publishing.service.gov.uk)

4.2 The Education Act 1996 states that:

- All students of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- The school must report to the Local Authority students who are absent for more than ten days without explanation.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered student is an offence punishable by law.

Education Act 1996 (legislation.gov.uk) - Part 6
Education Act 2002 (legislation.gov.uk) - Part 3

5 Partnership Expectations

What the school expects of our students
That students attend regularly on time and ready to learn
Students are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment
Students who arrive after registration time report to the office
Students tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school
What the school expects of parents/carers
Ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time to fulfil their legal responsibility
Notify school on the first day of absence and provide reason for absence
Complete a request form for absence in term time for **exceptional** circumstances
Supply medical evidence when required
Ensure all parental and child contact details are up to date
Provide school with two emergency contact details
Speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child/ren from attending
What the parents/carers can expect from the school
A broad, balanced education
Encouragement and rewards for good attendance and punctuality at school
Prompt action when a problem has been identified
Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
Contact with parents and carers on the first day when absence is unexplained
Liaison with officers from the Local Authority from a variety of teams to assist and support families where needed
Regular communication with parents and carers

6 Roles and responsibilities
6.1 Headteacher
The Head is responsible for:
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school

attendance – ensuring compliance with Keeping children Safe in Education 2024. [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

- Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting students at school with medical conditions - [Supporting students with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual students and whole school attendance.
- Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - students who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Ensuring all staff are aware of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, Children's Social Work Services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent students have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the student's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.
- Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Monitoring and analysing data and trends.
- Reporting to the Governing Body and Trusts the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, students, families, and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Open and honest communication with staff, students, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaising with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area/cluster, LAs, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.
- Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6.2 The School Senior Attendance Champion SLT
The School Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:
- Implementing the policy with the Head.

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Championing and improving attendance.
- Ensuring the practice that is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Oversight of data analysis -
  - Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes, raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
  - Robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group, and individual student level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
    - ➢ children who have a social worker including looked-after children
    - ➢ young carers
    - ➢ children who are eligible for free school meals
    - ➢ children who speak English as a second language
    - ➢ children who have special educational needs and disabilities
  - Keeping the Head and all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures.
  - Compiling attendance data for the Head, the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- Ensuring a positive working relationship with the School Attendance Service is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings.
- Communicating messages to students and parents.
- If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of students whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Undertaking home visits in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying students who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by students and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.

6.3 Teaching staff
Teaching staff are responsible for:
- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up-to-date.
- Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns.
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns.
- Emphasizing with students the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.

- Building respectful relationships with staff, students, families, and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, students, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of students whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or who are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Liaising with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and students. This will help relationships between students and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should:
  - treat students with dignity
  - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
  - take into consideration the vulnerability of some students and the ways in which this might contribute to absence
  - handle confidential information sensitively
  - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where students can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and students, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
  - communicate effectively with families regarding students' attendance and well-being
- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually.
- Emphasize the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate students to be in the classroom.
- Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions.
- Apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Follow up on absence and lateness with students to identify barriers and reasons for absence.
- Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality.
- Review form or tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early, and help set targets.
- Periodically review practice and consistency both across and between departments.
- Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction.
- Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of students.

6.4 Attendance and pastoral staff
Attendance and pastoral staff are responsible for:
- Ensuring the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate.
- Ensuring robust day-to-day processes are in place.
- Tracking and following up absence and poor punctuality (implement punctuality routines such as late gate or sign in procedures).

- Providing appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice.
- Carrying out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable children including children with a social worker. If absence continues without explanation, further contact should be made to ensure safeguarding.
- Identifying any absences that are not explained for each session and contacting parents to understand why, and when the student will return to school.
- Where absences are recorded as unexplained in the attendance inputting the correct code as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 school days after the session.
- Keeping parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the student's learning).
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of students whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identifying students who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and making the necessary referrals.
- Undertaking home visits in line with safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying and, where possible, mitigating potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies.
- Implementing children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate.
- Where students have additional vulnerabilities, which may require multi-agency meetings trying to arrange those meetings outside of lesson time, where possible.

For students at risk of persistent absence

- Providing regular attendance reports to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and student premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- Initiating and overseeing the administration of absence procedures. This should include:
  ➢ letters home
  ➢ attendance clinics
  ➢ engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners
  ➢ working with families and the community to identify which methods of communication work best, recognising potential barriers in hard-to-reach families and finding methods that work and are understood
  ➢ consideration as to whether further interventions are required in line with the statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures
  ➢ providing regular reports to leaders on the at-risk cohort

> ➢ providing regular reports/caseloads to local authority attendance team or independent attendance organisations to raise awareness of emerging at-risk students

For students who are persistently absent

- Developing and implementing persistent absence action plans with students and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines.
- Identifying tailored intervention which meets the needs of the student.
- Leading daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and impact of support, make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Liaising with school leaders (designated safeguarding, SENDco and pastoral leads) on referrals to external agencies and multi-agency assessments.
- Coordinating and contributing to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions.
- Working in partnership with School Attendance Service and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures.
- Providing regular reports to leaders on the impact of action plans and interventions.

7 Attendance procedures
7.1 Registration

- Registration takes place each morning from 8.30am until 8.50am and each afternoon from 11.50 until 12.35pm.
- Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) on the register for each student present and an N absent mark for any student that is absent. Students who are late
- The Attendance Team will contact parents/carers via text messages and phone calls from 9am if a student has an unexplained absence.
- Registers will be printed off at 9.00am by the Attendance Team in case there is a fire, fire drill or emergency where a record of students in school is required.

7.2 Taking registers in lessons

- Registers must be taken accurately within 10 minutes of the class starting.
- If a student is with a member of staff and has not been marked in their lesson, the member of staff should alert the Attendance Team.
- If a student does not arrive to a lesson, but has previous Present marks on Arbor, staff should log it as a New Behaviour Incident, 'Not in lesson' and assign it to 'On call'. Record the absence with an N
- Staff must not overwrite any marks that are on Arbor e.g. Exclusion, Medical, Illness, Holiday. If staff have any queries about a mark they should contact the Attendance Team.
- Staff should only mark their register either with present (/), late (L) or absent (N) and to not leave any blank. Staff should check the register is completed before closing down. Staff should not use the U code.
- If a student arrives late to a lesson, staff should change the mark from N to L as soon as possible.

7.3 Responding to lateness

- School gates/doors open at 08:20 and students are expected to be present in Form Time by 08:30am. After this time the only way to enter the school building is via reception. If students attend after this time they will deemed as late and will be marked as L code. Three late marks will result in a detention.
- After 9.20am the student is deemed to be Late/absent. Any student arriving in school after this time will be marked U or O if an unsatisfactory reason is given. In case of emergency the register shows the student is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late, and it may trigger an attendance meeting.
- If a student is going to be late parents/carers must contact the attendance team on the same day with the reason for the lateness. If a reason is received at a later date a planned detention may already stand.

7.4 Responding to absence
- Repeated absences will lead to detailed monitoring by the school attendance staff.
- Targets for improvement will be clear and communicated to student and parent or carer.
- School will organise support to remove barriers to regular attendance.
- School will organise meetings with parents or carers to review and improve attendance.
- If attendance does not improve, school will refer to the local authority for legal action.

7.5 Working with the Local Authorities School Attendance Service
- School works in partnership with the statutory School Attendance Service to devise a strategic approach to attendance through Register Checks and Targeted Support Meetings.
- The Headteacher/Senior Attendance Champion (SLT) and the Attendance school staff will meet with an Attendance Improvement Officer from the School Attendance Service when required, to discuss and improve attendance for persistently absent or severely absent students.
- Action plans will be developed for persistently and severely absent students.
- If parents/carers do not proactively engage with support offered through the action plan, then formal legal intervention may be requested from the School Attendance Service.
  Statutory intervention can include
  - Penalty Notices
  - Parenting Order
  - Education Supervision Order
  - Prosecution
- The DFE considers Persistent absence to be between 50-90% and Severely Absence below 50%. The attendance team will automatically monitor any attendance below 90%.
  - 10 unauthorised absences in 10 weeks will trigger a 'notice to improve letter'

- A meeting will be arranged with parents/carers to discuss barriers to attending school regularly
- The School will work with the families to improve attendance, this may involve external agencies where necessary
- If support from the School does not impact on attendance or the student's attendance falls below 70% then a School Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting may be called. This Panel has the authority to issue a Penalty Notice and recommend Legal Proceedings

8 Authorised and unauthorised and absence
8.1 Authorised absence
Authorised absence is defined as:
- Genuine illness, see the link below;
  - https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/
  - Wherever possible supporting evidence should be provided as it can help to authorise the absence, especially for long-term repeated absences.
- Medical or dental appointment, where possible, should be arranged out of school time. Appointment confirmations should be shown to the Attendance Team for authorized absence.
- Bereavement – (Headteacher's/Deputy Headteacher's discretion)
- Religious observance (The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong)
- Approved leave in term time where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.
  - Parents/carers are expected to only request a Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances and do so in advance. Holidays are not exceptional circumstances. The requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis and it is at the Schools discretion as to whether the absence will be authorised. Again, unauthorised absence may trigger monitoring.
  - In the first instance The Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice Fine (if it is decided that the absence is not authorised). This would be per child per parent at a rate of £80 per notice to be paid in full in 21 days. If not paid, the Penalty notice increases to £160 to be paid in 7 days or Local Authority Case work may be started.
- The student has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence
- No unexplained absences will be authorised by school. Absence of 5 or more days over the academic year will not be authorised without supporting evidence.
- Registers are checked daily and the attendance team will follow up with absentees.
- To ensure all children are safe, home visits and welfare checks will be carried when a child is absence in the following circumstances.
  - Parents and carers can not be contacted
  - Absence of 5 or more days
  - The school/Local Authority are monitoring attendance

- Parents have not attended a scheduled meeting with the Attendance Team in school.

8.2 Unauthorised absence
Unauthorised absence is defined as:
- Being late after the registers have closed - 'U' code
- Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping or having a haircut
- Where no explanation is offered by the parent or carer
- Where the school is not satisfied with an explanation offered
- Special occasions e.g. birthdays/weddings
- Holidays/leave in term time
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment
- Translating for family members
- Visiting sick relatives
- Exceptional term time leave longer than agreed by the Headteacher

9 Children Missing Education (CME)
A child who is absent as well as missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Where a child is reported to be missing education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any student who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for local authorities (DfE August 2024) and follow the Leeds Children's Services LA procedure and contact: cme@leeds.gov.uk. Tel: 0113 37896