



Poynton High School Attendance policy

Purpose

Poynton High School are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support excellent punctuality in attending lessons and registration.

Legislation and Guidance

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](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos

- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

Attendance data is shared with Governors via the Head Teacher Report and is monitored at the Welfare and Curriculum Sub Committee

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Leading on staff building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Leading on targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with the welfare teams and Local Authority to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Deputy Head Teacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer information from parents/carers to the year teams in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

Form Tutors and Class Teachers

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis at registration, using the correct codes, and submitting this information via the online register. Class Teachers are responsible for recording the attendance at the start of each lesson and updating should a student arrive during a lesson.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call/E-mail the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return

- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time
- Aim for an attendance of at least 97% per term
- In the event of a pre-planned doctors, dental or hospital appointment, show an appointment card, letter or note to reception
- If leaving the school premises with a legitimate reason students must report to Reception to sign out
- If arriving late to school, students must sign in at Reception

Attendance register

Poynton High School will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

Staff will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day which is at 8.45am during registration plus at the start of each less. The register will be marked to show whether each student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent – authorised or unauthorised
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Students must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.15am The register for the second session will be taken at the start of period 5 and will be kept open for 15 minutes.

Absence

- Please let the school know on the first day of absence if your child is going to miss school. A phone call to the school's dedicated attendance line or email absence@phs.cheshire.sch.uk for every day of absence is sufficient.
- Please try to make any medical and dental appointments, as far as possible, for holidays or after school. If that is not possible, school may only authorise the time of the appointment, plus commuting.
- Where a pattern of poor attendance is emerging, school will ask for the medical evidence as to why your child is unable to attend school. The school will decide whether to authorise or unauthorise the absence.

Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the L code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the U code which is an unauthorised absence
- Punctuality is also very important and we are often asked to comment on this when writing references for employment and further education courses. We find when students arrive promptly they are able to have a calm and settled start to their day.

- We will record the names of students who arrive after the 8.45am bell. Students signing in late will have to report to a member of staff on duty at break to explain the reason for lateness, failure to attend would result in a 30-minute lunchtime detention.
- A punctuality report will be issued for 3 lates in a half term and an email will be sent home. If lateness continues the welfare lead will contact home and an after-school detention will be issued. If there is no improvement a meeting with the parent/s/carer/s will be arranged.
- Any student who is late to school, after registration closes (09:15am) and they do not have a valid reason to be late, the absence will be coded as unauthorised (U).

Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Contact the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police for a welfare visit or conduct a home visit.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the LA attendance team.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels. Parents/Carers can access their child's attendance record at any point of the school year via the class charts parental app. All parents are given access to the app when their child joins Poynton High School.

Exceptional Circumstances leave during term-time.

The 2013 regulation amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The amendments give parents no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time.

The Head Teacher and the Governing Body will determine what the exceptional circumstances are.

PLEASE NOTE: • In line with Department for Education policy, the school's position is that leave of absence in term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances such as attendance at family weddings (immediate family), funerals, educational examinations or participation in religious observance and only then if attendance is over 95%. Availability of cheap holidays and overlap with the beginning or end of a term will not be accepted as exceptional circumstances.

- If school external examinations are missed, students will not be able to take them at a later date. Please note that the full cost of the exams missed will be invoiced to the parents/carers.
- Sixth Form students who receive the 16-19 Bursary will lose part of their payment for the period when unauthorised leave is taken.
- Students are responsible for making sure they complete work missed through absence.
- Parents should be aware that periods of unauthorised absence may lead to a fixed penalty notice being issued by the Educational Welfare Service.

All term dates and examination dates have been circulated via the school newsletter, and are available on the school website www.phs.cheshire.sch.uk

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for promoting attendance

- Provide regular attendance reports to year teams and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Support via Welfare Leaders, Family Worker and Teenage Worker
- Assemblies and PSHCE Curriculum
- Class Charts app so students can monitor their own attendance

Attendance monitoring

Poynton High School

- Monitor attendance and absence data fortnightly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Authorised absence

C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day