



**YORK HOUSE**

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## Attendance Policy

Reviewed September 2025

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## Key School Contacts

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### Introduction and Aims of this Policy

This Attendance Policy outlines York House School’s commitment to fostering high levels of attendance among all students. Consistent attendance is essential for students to fully engage in their education, contributing to their academic success, well-being, and future opportunities.

This policy applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To create and uphold a school-wide culture that highlights the importance of attendance and aspire to high levels of attendance for all pupils so they can thrive and reach their potential.
- To ensure every pupil has the opportunity to fully participate in, contribute and benefit from the school’s activities and learning.
- To prioritize and improve attendance and punctuality across the school, reduce instances of absence, and outline the School’s approach to managing non-attendance.
- To acknowledge the connection between attendance and pupil well-being, ensuring a consistent approach to safeguarding throughout the school.
- To foster a school environment centred on safety, equality, and protection for all pupils. This following policy is intended to provide a guide to attendance at York House School.

## **The Importance of Good Attendance**

York House School acknowledges the significance of fostering good attendance habits from the very beginning. This is a core element of the School's ethos and culture. In cultivating a culture of strong attendance, the School recognises:

- The vital role of good attendance, alongside positive behavior, as a fundamental aspect of the School's vision, values, ethos, and everyday operations.
- The connection between attendance and broader school improvement initiatives, integrating it into strategies for academic achievement, behavior, anti-bullying efforts, special educational needs, supporting pupils with medical conditions and/or disabilities, mental health, safeguarding, and assisting disadvantaged students.
- The importance of setting high standards for attendance and punctuality for all pupils, and ensuring these expectations are communicated regularly and clearly to both students and their families.
- That attendance is a continuous focus that requires ongoing review and adaptation of messages, processes, and strategies.
- The critical role of identifying children missing education as a key indicator of potential safeguarding concerns, such as neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual or criminal exploitation.

## **The Schools' Core Duties**

- Promote high attendance through a whole-school culture
- Daily registers must be taken twice per day, using correct national codes. Registers are legal documents and must be preserved for 6 years.
- Follow-up on absence daily
- Analyse data to spot patterns and intervene early.
- Work with the Local Authority to support pupils not attending regularly.
- Work with families to understand barriers and provide support (pastoral help, early help, referrals).
- Train, educate and support staff

## **Regulatory Framework:**

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014;
- EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (DfE, January 2024);]
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Children Act 1989;
- Childcare Act 2006;
- Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2023);
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Equality Act 2010; and
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, applies from 19 August 2024);
- Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance (DfE, September 2023);
- Guidance for parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, September 2023);
- 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2024);
- School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (DfE, May 2020);
- Children missing education (DfE, September 2016);
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);
- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);
- Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);
- Remote education guidance (DfE, updated February 2023); and
- SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015)].

The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Missing Child guidance and Procedures
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Guidelines
- Behaviour policy

### **Publication and availability**

- Published on School Website
- This policy is available in hard copy and large print or other accessible forms on request

### **Definitions and Interpretation**

**Attendance** refers to attending all or part of the school day.

**Parent** includes: Natural parents (married or not); those with parental responsibility for a pupil; and anyone with day-to-day care of a pupil (i.e., lives with and cares for the pupil).

**Pupil** refers to anyone receiving education at the school, except: Those aged 19 or older receiving further education; or those receiving part-time education suitable for those over compulsory school age.

**SAC** stands for School Attendance Champion.

**AO** stands for Attendance Officer.

**PLT** refers to the Pastoral Leadership Team

## **Attendance**

Effective schools convey their positive regard for regular attendance to parents, pupils and teachers. Children quickly pick up the message that their presence is important.

Children are expected to attend school for each school day in the academic year, unless there is a good reason. Families will contact the school via the school portal, email or phone call to the attendance officer or pupils tutor.

Parents are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. Parents do-not have the right to take their child out of school for such a holiday. A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement or self-confidence, which the school, and parents, must seek to avoid.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for longer planned absence, the school may choose to grant leave of absence of up to 10 days in any school year. All cases should be discussed with the Headmaster. A child who is absent longer than 10 days after an agreed return date, can legally be removed from the school roll.

For planned absence requests or absences over half a day, this must be formally requested in advance via the Head's PA. With absences under half a day the pupils form tutor must be contacted in advance (e.g., for late drop-offs or early pickups). In considering whether or not to authorise leave, the school will consider each case individually, taking into account a child's overall attendance and the reason for the leave.

## **Absence and Lateness**

Nursery pupils can arrive up to 9.00am but for all other pupils School registration begins at 8.15am and runs until 8.30am by which time they should all be in school. Lessons begin at 8.30am and any child arriving later should report to the school office. If accompanied, the parent or carer should give a reason for the lateness which will be entered in the register. The child will then start the school day.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

If you believe your child will be late or absent, you can:

- Let the school (both the Form Tutor and Office) know as soon as possible by note or email why your child is away
- Try to make appointments outside school time.
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary.

## **Attendance registration system**

Attendance is recorded on the school's iSAMS database twice a day, both in the morning and afternoon using the registration codes identified by the Department for Education.

## **Maintaining records and reporting to the authorities**

The school's attendance register is summarised weekly and stored electronically. It is backed up, in the form of an electronic copy, at least once a month and records are retained for six years after the end of the school year in question.

## **Summary of Responsibilities for Attendance**

### **Governor Oversight**

The Governing Board holds overall responsibility for this policy. Recognising that improving attendance is a leadership issue, a designated senior leader has been appointed, the SAC, to oversee and improve attendance. Governors will receive regular reports and updates.

### **Specific Staff Responsibilities:**

- Ensure registers are taken accurately morning and afternoon.
- Seek explanations for pupil absences on return to school.
- Investigate unexplained absences, including during the school day, and follow up formally.
- Monitor trends/patterns in pupil attendance
- Address lateness consistently and promptly.
- Discuss non-attendance and lateness with pupils and parents, emphasizing the importance of punctuality.
- To give regular advice and guidance and receive regular specialist training and professional development.

### **Staff Training**

- All staff receive induction and refresher training on the importance of good attendance, school procedures, and their responsibilities.
- Staff with specific attendance roles receive additional training on legal duties, register keeping, data analysis, and working with external agencies to support pupils.
- Training is updated regularly and linked to safeguarding, SEND, and wellbeing.
- The school keeps written records of all staff training.

### **All Staff Responsibilities:**

- Understand the importance of good attendance and communicate consistently with pupils and parents.
- Receive regular guidance, training and professional development related to attendance management.

### **School Arrangements**

- Maintain accurate admission and attendance registers electronically.
- Follow day-to-day processes to monitor and follow up on absences.

## **Monitoring Attendance**

- Regular data analysis to identify pupils or cohorts needing additional support.
- Track attendance patterns.
- Share attendance reports with PLT and school leaders.
- Benchmark attendance at school, year group, and cohort levels.
- Develop strategies to improve poor attendance.
- Monitor effectiveness of attendance interventions.
- Attendance Targets – school should review attendance annually measured against annual attendance data vs. national averages.
- Report to Governors.

## **Pupil Responsibilities**

- Attend school every day and all scheduled lessons.
- Arrive on time and remain on-site unless authorized to leave.
- Engage with attendance systems; unexplained absences will be followed up.
- Persistent lateness or absence may result in: Offers of support, communication/meeting with parents, referral to external agencies, sanctions aligned with behaviour policies
- Pupils experiencing barriers to attendance should speak to staff, ideally their Form Tutor.

## **Additional Needs and Vulnerable Groups**

- Work with pupils and parents to remove barriers to attendance.
- Make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities.
- Collaborate with parents and local authorities to support pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Consider strategies for pupils with social, emotional, or mental health issues.
- Consider strategies for disadvantaged pupils, looked-after children, and pupils with social workers.
- Refer to external support or early help where barriers are outside school control.
- Notify the local authority if a pupil's illness is expected to cause 15+ days of absence.

## **Parent / Carer Responsibilities**

- Legally responsible for ensuring child receives full-time education.
- Ensure pupils attend every school day unless authorized absence or illness.
- Understand expectations and consequences of poor attendance.
- Communicate absences promptly
- Notify school of planned medical/dental appointments, make every effort to organise these outside of school hours.

## **Completing the Register**

All staff complete the register electronically using ISAMS but if, for some reason this is not possible, then a hand written register is conducted and the appropriate steps taken to correct the computer problem. Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils;

they are documents that may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school. They may also contribute to pupil's end of term reports and to records of achievement. For these reasons registers are required to be marked on the computer and not easily erased.

Tutors will use ISAMS to record absence in their morning registration period by selecting YES or NO. Afternoon registers will be taken by staff and given to the school office.

AO will update register using appropriate letters to explain absence as follows:

#### Counted as Present

/ - Present (am)

\ - Present (pm)

L - Late

K - Attending Education provision arranged by local authority

V - Educational Visit or Trip

P - Approved Sporting Activity

W - Attending Work Experience

B - Attending any other approved educational activity

#### Authorised Absence

C - Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

C1 - Participating in performance or employment abroad

C2 - Leave of absence for part-time timetable

M - Medical / Dental Appointments

J1 - Interview or admission to another educational institution

S - Study Leave

T - Parent travelling for occupational purposes

R - Religious Observance

I - Illness

E - Suspended or permanently excluded

#### Not Counted in Attendance Calculations

X - Non-Compulsory School Age Absence

D - Dual Registered at another school

Q - Unable to attend due to access arrangements

Y1 - Transport not available

Y2 - Widespread disruption to travel

Y3 - Part of the school premises closed

Y4 - Whole site unexpectedly closed

Y5 - Pupil in criminal justice detention

Y6 - Public Health guidance or law

Y7 - Any other unavoidable cause

Z - Pupil not on admission register

# - Planned whole school closure

#### Unauthorised Absence

G - Holiday not granted by school

N - Reason for absence not yet established

O - Unknown circumstances

U - Arrived after registration closed

## **York House School Attendance Process (See appendix A)**

### **Monitoring and Proactive Support**

Termly data will be analysed by the PLT, pupils' attendance below 90% will be added to a monitoring list and discussed in Pastoral meetings with supportive interventions and plans put in place where necessary.

### **Awareness and Engagement Initiatives – Positive Culture**

- Promote a whole-school culture valuing high attendance and punctuality.
- Assemblies can be given on the importance of attendance
- Tutor presentations can include our attendance process to families at welcome evenings
- Periodic family messages can be shared via school portal
- Termly celebration assemblies can include attendance awards
- Pupil Voice / Engagement – consider adding how pupils' perspectives will be gathered (e.g. surveys, school council input) on barriers to attendance.

### **Unexplained Absence Follow-Up Process**

The AO or office sends an email to families after registers are reviewed requesting absence reason if none given. If no response:

- Tutors are informed and must follow up within 24 hours.
- If no contact is made, the Head of Section is informed to escalate.
- On request of the Form Tutor or member of the Senior team, the Office should give details of the running totals of authorised and unauthorised absences and lates.

### **Authorising Absence**

When families respond, the office authorises absence on ISAMs using the correct code. Tutors must relay family responses to the AO or office if contacted directly.

### **Persistent Unexplained Absences and/or Lateness**

Each case should be judged on its own merits, and in view of current Government guidelines but in the case of persistent lateness and/or absence the Form Tutor will contact the parents by email.

If this pattern continues the Form Tutor (FT) should alert the Head of Section who should:

- Have a discussion with the FT/Head of SEND/Matron as to any extenuating circumstances
- Contact the parents by email and talk through the situation

If poor attendance continues after this then the Deputy Head Pastoral/Attendance Lead and the Deputy Head Pastoral in the Pre-Prep should be informed and contact the parents. Meetings can be arranged to support families and attendance contracts may be introduced. Potential fixed penalty notices, prosecutions, or Education Supervision Orders are also possible where all other support fails.

Local authorities have a legal responsibility to identify children of compulsory school age who are not in education. Schools are required to alert their local authority after a pupil of compulsory school age has:

- been absent without authority for 10 (consecutive or irregular) school days, or
- failed to attend school regularly (15+ days of consecutive or accumulated illness) or been removed from the school without the school being informed

Signed by



Headmaster

Date: September 2025

Signed by



Chair of Governors

Date: September 2025

Please see Policy Review Matrix for next review date

## Appendix A

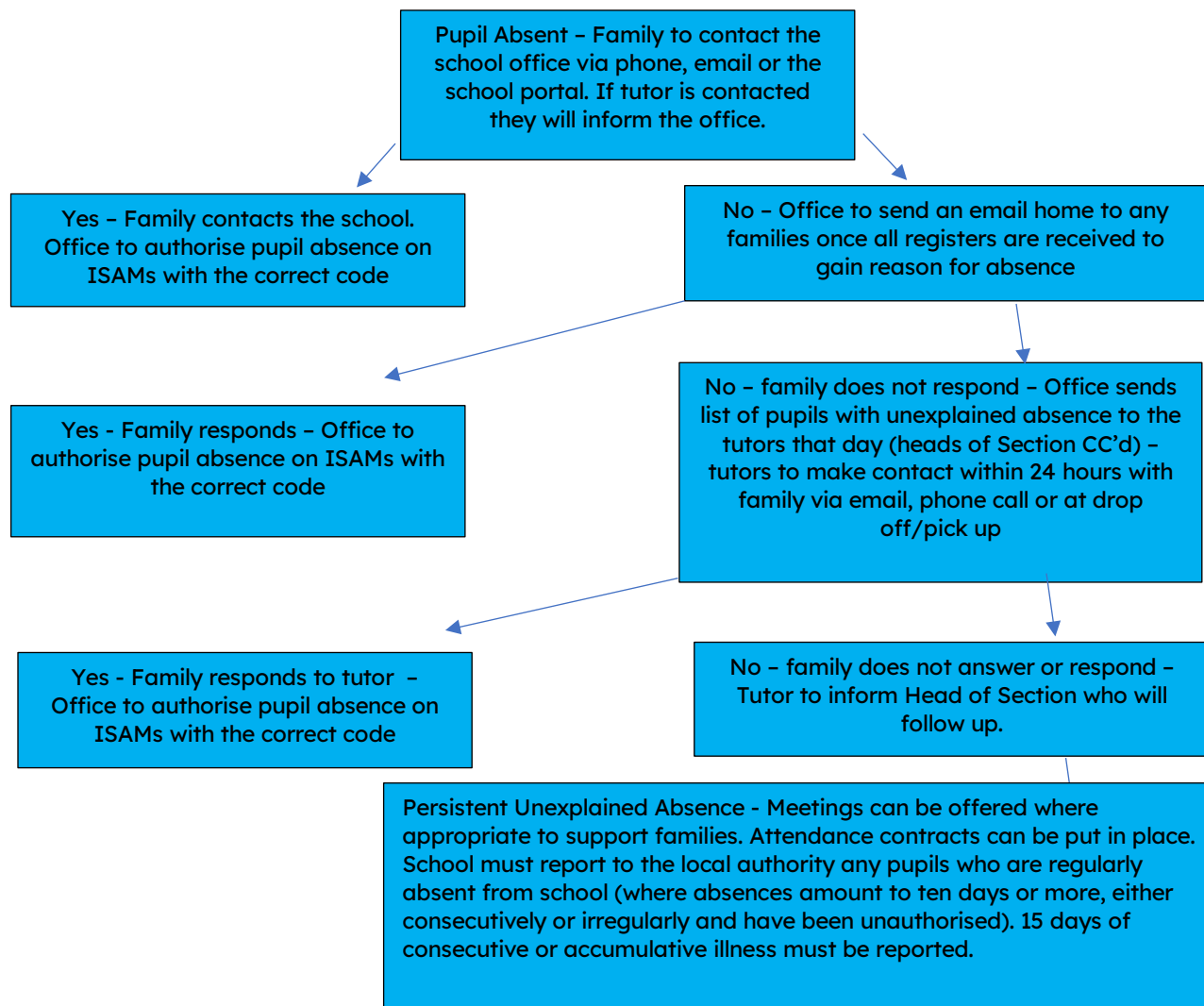
**Attendance Lead - Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL (Mike Gedye)**

**Attendance Officer - Office Staff (Nicola Townsend)**

**Supported by Pastoral Leadership Team (including Headmaster and Heads of Section)**

Any known planned absence more than half a day must be formally requested in advance by contacting the Heads PA

The form tutor must be contacted for late drop offs or early pick-ups less than half a day



### Proactive approach and next steps to support pupils and families

PLT to analyse attendance data every term to identify any concerns - Absence 85%-90% will be on a monitoring list and shared in sectional meetings so staff are aware. Where appropriate for pupils under 85% (where intervention has not already occurred) emails can be sent to families by the Head of Section to let them know that attendance is low and to offer support. The Attendance Lead can then follow up if no response and no improvement.

Assemblies on the impacts of poor attendance delivered in sectional assemblies  
Slides on attendance and process to families in tutor presentation  
Periodic family portal messages reminding the importance of attendance.