

Skirlaugh CE Primary School

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart”

Be Brave ~ Be Kind ~ Be Your Best



Attendance Policy

Approved by Governors	Summer 2026
Last Renewal Date	Summer 2026
Next Renewal Date	Summer 2028

1. Policy Statement

At Skirlaugh CE Primary, we recognise that regular attendance is essential to ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential. In line with Department for Education guidance, we are committed to promoting high levels of attendance through a whole-school culture of high expectations, where attendance is everyone's responsibility.

Our vision, *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart,"* underpins our expectation that pupils attend school consistently and engage fully in their learning. This is reinforced by our mission, *"Be brave, be kind, be your best,"* which supports pupils to attend regularly and make the most of every opportunity.

We work in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance and provide timely support. This policy sets out how we promote, monitor and support attendance for all pupils, in line with statutory requirements.

2. Aims

The aims of our policy are to:

- Promote a whole-school culture of high expectations for attendance and punctuality, where these are valued by pupils, staff and families as essential to success.
- Ensure that all pupils access full-time education which meets their needs and enables them to achieve their full potential.
- Provide a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment in which every pupil feels supported to attend and engage fully in school life.
- Promote and maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality, and reduce all forms of absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Act early to identify patterns of absence and implement timely, effective support and intervention.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers, the local authority and other agencies to remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensure that all pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education by developing positive habits and attitudes towards attendance and punctuality.
- Reinforce that improving attendance is a shared responsibility across the whole school community.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy has due regard to current legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- Working together to improve school attendance (Department for Education, statutory guidance, August 2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Department for Education)
- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Strategic Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Pupil Premium Strategy

4. Expectations

Promoting high levels of attendance is a shared responsibility across the whole school community. The school expects all stakeholders to work in partnership to ensure that pupils attend regularly, arrive on time and are supported to engage fully in their education.

The School

At Skirlaugh CE Primary School, we will:

- Provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued and motivated to attend.
- Promote a whole-school culture of high expectations for attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure attendance is effectively monitored and recorded in line with statutory requirements.
- Identify patterns of absence at the earliest opportunity and take prompt, proportionate action.
- Work proactively with parents/carers to remove barriers to attendance, offering support where needed.
- Engage with external agencies, including the local authority, where additional support or intervention is required.
- Communicate clearly with families regarding attendance expectations, concerns and support strategies.
- Recognise and celebrate good and improved attendance.
- Ensure that attendance is considered as part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Parents and Carers

In working in partnership with the school, parents or carers are expected to:

- Ensure that their child attends school every day, on time, unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- Notify the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence, and provide a clear reason.
- Provide medical evidence where requested to support absences.
- Avoid taking holidays during term time, except in exceptional circumstances and with prior authorisation from the headteacher.
- Engage with the school where attendance concerns arise and work collaboratively to address any barriers.
- Support the school's ethos and expectations regarding attendance and punctuality.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day and arrive on time.
- Be ready to learn and engage positively in all aspects of school life.
- Take responsibility, where appropriate to their age and understanding, for their own attendance and punctuality.
- Speak to a trusted adult in school if they are experiencing difficulties that may affect their attendance.
- Uphold the school's values to *be brave, be kind, be your best* by attending regularly and contributing positively to the school community.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Class Teachers

- Complete attendance registers accurately and on time.
- Record and report pupil absences promptly, passing relevant information to the school office.
- Support the identification of attendance issues and communicate concerns to the school Attendance Officer.

School Attendance Officer - Mrs Leonard

- Monitor and analyse attendance data, identifying pupils with low or declining attendance.
- Liaise with parents/carers to understand barriers to attendance and offer support where appropriate.
- Work with the headteacher and Education Welfare Officer to address persistent absence.

- Ensure statutory reporting to the local authority and parents is completed where necessary.

School Administrative Staff - Miss Taylor

- Maintain accurate pupil records and attendance data.
- Respond to absence communications from parents/carers.
- Provide attendance information to staff, the headteacher, and governing board as required.

Headteacher - Mrs Pitois

- Lead the strategic direction of attendance improvement across the school.
- Monitor attendance patterns and implement interventions to support pupils and families.
- Report school-level attendance data to the governing body and relevant authorities.
- Take action, including issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Governing Board

- Promote the importance of attendance and hold school leaders accountable.
- Regularly review attendance data and challenge the leadership team on areas for improvement.
- Ensure staff receive training to support attendance monitoring and interventions.

6. Promoting Good Attendance

At Skirlough CE Primary School, we recognise that encouraging and celebrating good attendance is just as important as addressing absence. We aim to create a positive culture where pupils feel motivated, supported, and valued for attending school regularly.

Celebrating Good Attendance:

- Recognition in assemblies, newsletters, and through leaderboards of collaborative attendance
- Rewards presented termly to pupils achieving 100% attendance *e.g. swimming vouchers*
- Recognition to praise all pupils meeting the school's target of 96% termly attendance *eg. stickers*
- Encouraging peer support and positive reinforcement to make attendance a shared value across the school

Available Support:

- Individual support plans for pupils with specific needs or barriers to attendance
- Referral to pastoral (ELSA) or safeguarding teams where appropriate
- Liaison with external agencies, including the Local Authority and family support services, to address challenges affecting attendance
- Reintegration plans following prolonged absence to help pupils settle back into school and catch up on missed learning

- Attendance at breakfast club to support attendance and punctuality

7. Attendance Procedures

Attendance Register Codes

Registers are completed twice daily: morning registration and afternoon registration, in line with statutory requirements. All staff must use the correct codes to ensure accurate reporting. The table found in Appendix I outlines the codes used at Skirlaugh CE Primary School.

All codes are entered into the school's MIS (Compass) and monitored by the Attendance Officer. Consistency in coding ensures compliance with DfE and local authority requirements.

Procedures for Reporting Absence

Unplanned Absence (illness)

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of absence via phone, email, or adding an attendance note on the school's MIS (Compass). This should be completed by 9:15am at the latest.

Absence due to genuine illness will usually be authorised. However, the school may request medical evidence in the following circumstances:

- Absences are prolonged (more than 3 days)
- Patterns of absence cause concern
- There are doubts about the authenticity of the illness

Children should attend school if they are well enough to participate in lessons.

Common minor illnesses (colds, mild coughs, runny noses, headaches, sore throats and tiredness) do not require absence. To support attendance during minor illnesses, the school is able to administer basic pain relief such as paracetamol (Calpol) or similar, in line with the school's *Medical Policy* and with parental consent.

Children should stay home for:

- Fever/temperature
- Vomiting or diarrhoea (48-hour exclusion from last episode)
- Infectious conditions requiring exclusion under public health guidance (e.g., chickenpox, scarlet fever) - further information relating to this can be found in the appendices.

If a child develops an illness during the school day, parents/carers will be contacted.

Planned Absence (medical appointments and exceptional leave)

Parents/carers should schedule medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. If attendance during school time is unavoidable:

- Parents must notify the school in advance via telephone, email, or through the MIS (Compass).
- The child should attend school before and/or after the appointment whenever feasible.

Routine non-urgent appointments during the school day may not be authorised at the discretion of the headteacher.

Holidays in term time are **unauthorised unless exceptional circumstances** are approved by the headteacher.

Late Arrival Procedure

At Skirlaugh CE Primary School, class registers close at 9:15am. Pupils arriving after the register closes must sign in at the office and state the reason for lateness.

- Pupils arriving after the register closes, but before 9:30am are marked as “L” (authorised).
- Pupils arriving after 9:30am are marked as “U” (unauthorised) and may trigger intervention if persistent.

Patterns of persistent lateness are monitored by the Attendance Officer and addressed in partnership with parents/carers.

Unexplained Absence Procedure

Skirlaugh CE Primary School takes all unexplained absences seriously, recognising the potential safeguarding risks associated with a pupil not attending school without explanation. The following procedures will be followed for any absence where no reason has been provided:

1. **First Day of Absence:**
 - If a pupil is absent and the school has not received a message from a parent/carer by 9:30am, the Attendance Officer or office staff will contact the first emergency contact provided.
2. **Escalation if No Contact:**
 - If no response is received from the first contact, the school will continue to contact all alternative emergency contacts on file by 10:30am to establish the pupil's whereabouts.
3. **Home Visit / Safeguarding Consideration:**
 - If the pupil remains unaccounted for after all contacts have been attempted by midday, and there are safeguarding concerns, the school may carry out a home visit to check on the child's welfare, following the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
4. **Recording and Reporting:**

- All attempts to contact parents/carers and any actions taken (calls, messages, home visits) will be recorded on CPOMS and communicated to the Headteacher.
- Persistent unexplained absence will trigger follow-up interventions in line with the school's persistent absence procedures and may involve the Education Welfare Officer or other safeguarding agencies.

5. Authorisation:

- Absences remain unauthorised until a valid reason is provided. Once a legitimate reason is confirmed, the Attendance Officer will update the register accordingly.

8. Legal Sanctions and Penalty Notices

Skirlough CE Primary School, in partnership with the Local Authority, is committed to promoting regular school attendance. Where unauthorised absence occurs, formal action may be taken in line with statutory guidance (*Working together to improve school attendance*, DfE, 2024).

Penalty Notices:

- Local Authorities and schools can issue fixed-penalty notices (FPNs) to parents or carers for the unauthorised absence of a child of compulsory school age.
- If issued with a penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay the Local Authority £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days for each child. Payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

When a Penalty Notice May Be Issued:

Headteachers will decide whether it is appropriate to issue a penalty notice, taking 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
- Cases where an excluded or suspended pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

9. Monitoring Attendance and Persistent Absence

Attendance Monitoring

To support high levels of attendance, the school will continually monitor and act to improve attendance. Attendance data will be analysed weekly by the school administration team. Our half termly newsletter includes information on attendance and promotes the importance of regular school attendance. Where

action is required, this will follow a staged approach as outlined below. A termly meeting between the attendance officer and the local authority EWO will take place to discuss any attendance concerns.

Stage 0 - Refers to the approaches taken to promote high attendance for all pupils across school. This involves continued monitoring of attendance to identify and intervene with attendance concerns early. Parents / carers of all pupils who are absent without reason, will be contacted on the first day of absence.

Stage 1 – Where a pupil's attendance falls below 95%, parents/ carers will receive a Stage 1 letter to notify of monitoring and to support an improvement in attendance. Where improvements are made the following term, positive letters will be sent; monitoring will cease once the child's attendance returns to 95%.

Stage 2 - Parents/carers will be sent a Stage 2 letter where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, inviting them to a meeting with the Headteacher. This meeting will be to discuss ways to support sustained improved attendance for the pupil. An Attendance Contract may be put in place with targets for improvement. Absence at this stage will be classed as persistent.

Stage 3 – Where a pupil's attendance remains less than 90%, is not improving, or continues to fall and the targets set out in the Attendance Contract have not been attained, a stage 3 letter will be sent out. This will invite parents/carers to an attendance meeting with the Headteacher and the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to review the contract and ascertain next steps under the guidance of the Local Authority. Absence at this stage will be classed as severe.

The Headteacher will exercise professional discretion when determining the appropriate stage for intervention. For example, pupils with long-term illness, medical needs, or other exceptional circumstances may not be penalised, and the staged approach may be adapted or paused in order to provide appropriate support.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum bi-annually by the Headteacher. The policy will be approved by the Governing Board as part of its delegated responsibilities.

Appendix I: Attendance Codes

Code	Description	Authorised/Unauthorised
/ or *	Present (am / pm)	Authorised
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised until clarified
I	Illness	Authorised, unless authenticity concerns arise
M	Medical/Dental appointment	Authorised if in line with policy
C	Other authorised circumstances (e.g., exceptional family circumstances)	Authorised
O	Unauthorised absence	Unauthorised
L	Late arrival before register closes	Authorised, counts as present
U	Late after register closes	Unauthorised
R	Religious observance	Authorised
B	Educated off-site (approved educational activity)	Authorised
G	Family holiday (not authorised)	Unauthorised
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted

Appendix 2: East Riding of Yorkshire Council Absence from school for exceptional circumstances - Information for Parents

There is no longer a provision in law for Headteachers to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday.

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. This has been defined by the Supreme Court as 'in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school meaning attending every occasion available unless authorised by the Head Teacher. There is, however, a discretionary power held by Headteachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Please note this is not an entitlement. The Headteacher will only authorise absence in line with the East Riding Behaviour & Attendance Partnership 'Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances' Policy. Headteachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education. Please note that supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.

Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

Penalty Notices

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the Headteacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent. If your child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, you may be liable for a penalty notice (one day's absence equals two sessions and a five-day absence is equal to 10 sessions etc.).

Penalty Notices will be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing. They will be issued by post direct to the home of a parent after possibly just one warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, warnings may not be given. This includes pupils caught on truancy sweeps, persistent late arrival after the close of registration or unauthorised absence that has not been authorised as an absence from school for exceptional circumstances. In these cases, the warning is given on the absence request form and detailed within this information leaflet and no written warning will be given. Where parents do not follow school procedures of submitting a request and simply remove their child without seeking prior approval, a warning may not be given. Parents must complete a request for exceptional leave form and submit this to the school, allowing for sufficient time to enable the school to consider the request and inform the parent of the decision.

Fines are issued for unauthorised absence of 5 or more days and each school day is divided into 2 registration periods. For example, if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions, and a five-day absence is equal to 10 sessions.

If your request is declined and you take your child out of school each person with day-to-day care of the child(ren) may be issued with a £160 penalty notice if paid within 28 days this reduces to £80 if paid

within 21 days. If after 28 days the fine remains unpaid you may be summoned to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice within 3 years of the first penalty notice, the second penalty notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. If after 28 days the fine remains unpaid you may be summoned to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

If a third penalty notice referral is received within a 3-year period, a further penalty notice fine cannot be issued and legal action will be considered.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if you have any questions about this, or if you need help to achieve an improvement, please contact your child's school to discuss this.

We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.

Appendix 3: Advice for Parents - should I keep my child off school?



UK Health
Security
Agency



Should I keep my child off school?

Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.