


# Attendance Policy

## Thomas Keble School



This is a <b>statutory policy</b> and was agreed upon by the Full Trust Board on (and supersedes all previous policies relating to this area):	09 April 2025
Signed by The Chair of Trustees Mr Julian Wintle:	
Implemented:	April 2025
Review date:	April 2027
Author:	S P Shaw

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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regard to school attendance by:

- Promoting attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

We will also support parents<sup>1</sup> to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We expect pupils to be in school for **every session** of the school day and for **every day** that the school is open.

## 2. Objectives

- To discharge the school's duty to safeguard its students to the best of its ability;
- To improve the overall percentage of pupil attendance at school.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school.
- To set out agreed roles and responsibilities and promote consistency.
- To provide support, advice, and guidance to parents and students.
- To use a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance-related data.
- To maintain positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality, using newsletters and other communications to parents; making attendance a high priority.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Inclusion Service and other services and agencies.
- Recognise the needs of individual students when planning re-integration following significant periods of absence.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Parent' is defined on pages 7 and 8 of this document.

- Have a Senior Attendance Champion (CWH)

### 3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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](#)
- [Working together to Improve School Attendance Aug 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trustee board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds

#### 4.1 Trustees

The Trustee board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. Reports will be received via the Quality of Education Committee.

#### 4.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Trustees
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

- AAHT (PA Strategic Lead) Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### 4.3 Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team are responsible for:

- Supporting the Headteacher with the implementation of this policy at the school

### 4.3 Assistant Headteacher

The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy at the school
- Setting annual attendance target with the Headteacher.
- Supporting the work of the Heads of Year.
- Meeting with the Attendance Team, make referrals and monitor the outcomes.
- Overseeing the general administration of the SIMS and Classcharts registration systems.
- Ensuring all staff new to the school are fully aware of the registration systems and attendance policy.
- Attending Local Authority Attendance Network meetings
- Overseeing lateness to school and to initiate appropriate action when necessary in conjunction with Head of Key Stage, and Heads of Year.
- Working with colleagues to identify causes of non-attendance.
- Giving attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- Assisting in the production of termly attendance return.
- Monitoring the performance of the Attendance Team and advise the Headteacher accordingly.
- Reporting trends to the Trustees Quality of Education Committee.
- Keeping attendance policy under review to reflect [Local Authority guidance](#).
- Attending monthly meetings to discuss attendance

### 4.4 Heads of Year

Heads of Key Stage/Heads of Year are responsible for:

- Giving attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- Ensuring 100% attendance is recognised and rewarded.
- Supporting and monitoring the work for the Tutors and agree plans of action when necessary.
- Meeting with parents to discuss unauthorised absence, and to liaise with Tutors.
- Organising the provision of work for all excluded pupils and long-term absentees where absence has been authorised.
- Providing work for medically authorised absence only.

- Regularly putting attendance on agenda of Year meetings.
- Following up truancy and those pupils who arrive late to school on a consistent basis, with appropriate sanctions.
- Monitoring attendance, including lesson attendance so that absconding is followed up and dealt with.
- Working with identified Persistent Absentee students (80% and lower) to complete an attendance plan and communicate with parents – see [appendix 2](#).

#### 4.5 Heads of Department

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Including attendance as an agenda at department meetings whenever possible
- Informing Head of Year of attendance issues.

#### 4.6 Subject teachers

Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Taking a register of attendance at the start of each lesson (within 10 minutes)
- Marking the register accurately using Class Charts.
- Providing support and clear guidelines on catching up on missed work
- Highlighting students whose attendance is causing concern at departments meetings and with Heads of Year.
- Following up any suspected internal truancy by informing the Head of Year and Head of Department.

#### 4.7 Tutors

Tutors are responsible for:

- Informing Head of Year of attendance issues.
- Giving attendance and punctuality a high profile.
- Implementing the system for registration.
- Ensuring that all information they receive about a student's absence (in advance or after an absence) is passed on to the Attendance Administrator.
- Informing the Attendance Team and Head of Year of home/personal circumstances which affect a student's attendance.
- Monitoring for patterns of absence and share issues with the Head of Year.
- Being sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.
- Encouraging and promote good attendance.
- Discussing attendance with tutees in line with [Appendix 2](#).

## 4.8 The Attendance Team

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reporting to Assistant Head (Pastoral) any concerns regarding the marking of registers
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Attendance Team, AAHT and Head of Year.
- Working with the Attendance Team/Tutors/Heads of Year/ AAHT to tackle persistent absence
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Ensuring the school registers are coded accurately
- Ensuring there are no missing registration marks
- Passing on requests to the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Attending fortnightly meetings to discuss attendance
- Following systems as set out in [Appendix 2](#)
- Liaising with Assistant Headteacher, Attendance Officer and/or AAHT and Year Leaders on at SMT Business meeting, on a weekly basis.
- Liaising with home and school when a student's attendance is a concern.
- Working with referred students, and their parent(s)/carer(s), in order to improve attendance.
- Liaising with other agencies if required to improve an individual student's attendance.
- Attending Local Authority Attendance Network meetings when possible
- Acting as liaison officer between home and school
- Arranging Attendance Improvement Meetings
- Making home visits and complete assessments when possible
- Investigating students who may be Children missing from Education (CME) and inform the relevant LA students who are CME
- Providing termly reports on part-time timetables to the Local Authority.
- Implementing legal proceedings if appropriate.
- Advising the school about Local Authority protocol relating to attendance.

- Following systems as set out in [Appendix 2](#)

#### 4.8 School Administration staff

School admin staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.
- Supporting the attendance officer as required.

#### 4.9 All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Making students aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- Being a good role model by being punctual to all registrations, lesson, clubs etc.

#### 4.10 Students

Students are responsible for:

- Arriving at school by 8.40am and be in their registration room by 8:45am.
- Reporting to reception if late to school and sign in.
- Ensuring parents provide a note/medical appointment card when appropriate.
- Moving purposefully between lessons, arriving punctually at all times.
- Signing in and out at the school office when necessary.

#### 4.11 Parents

Parents may be recognised differently under education law and under family law. [Section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#) states that, in relation to a child or young person, a 'parent' includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility for or care of the child.

For the purposes of education law, the Department for Education (DfE) considers a 'parent' to include:

- All biological parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person – this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, a guardian or other relative;
- Any person who, although they are not a biological parent and do not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after them, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

If a person is not the biological parent of a child, does not have parental responsibility for the child, and the child no longer lives with them, it is unlikely they will be recognised as a parent. Any disputes about whether a person is a child's 'parent' within the meaning of [section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#) are for the courts to decide.

DfE may also refer to a 'corporate parent' within statutory and non-statutory guidance. This term is used to describe local authorities and partner organisations that contribute to services provided to looked-after children, namely children who are the subject of a care order. A care order gives the local authority (the 'corporate parent') parental responsibility under [section 33\(3\) of the Children Act 1989](#).

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring their children attend school every day.
- Ensuring their child arrives on time.
- Informing the school of the reason for absence on the first day if at all possible by 9am.
- Providing an explanation for absence (wherever possible at start of first day and then to keep the school informed throughout the absence on each subsequent day).
- Not taking holidays in term time Penalty notice to be issued for 10+ missed sessions.
- Endeavoring to keep health appointments out of school hours when possible, and to provide evidence of appointment cards for matters which will affect attendance.
- Working with the school to resolve any problems concerning unauthorised absence.
- Providing medical evidence when requested by the school.

## 5. Recording attendance

### 5.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made (See History of Changes Report on SIMs)
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45 a.m. on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45 am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 2:15pm by teachers at the start of period 5 and will be kept open until 2:45pm

## 5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first and every subsequent day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents/Guardians can notify the school by calling 01452 770301 or using the Class Charts app or website

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## 5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents/carers must contact the school or provide a note to confirm any medical appointment. Pupils cannot be released from school until we have confirmation from a parent. Copies of original documents may be requested.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### 5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil 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
- The Attendance Officer will advise the Head of Year (HOY) on a weekly basis of those pupils arriving late. Heads of Year will ensure detentions are issued where necessary.
- The Attendance Team will send letters to parents where pupils are consistently late and where unauthorised absences are becoming frequent.
- If the problem persists the Attendance Officer will follow procedure for legal action set out by the Education Inclusion Service.
- May result in penalty notice, or contribute towards if persists

#### 5.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phone or email.
- Ensure that the Attendance Officer monitors attendance and meets with the Attendance Team and Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) once per fortnight to discuss attendance issues
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Adhere to all legal duties regarding any student who is absent for 10 consecutive days. If the student is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent then Gloucestershire Local Authority is notified that the student is at risk of missing from education (CME). Gloucestershire Local Authority will attempt to contact parents/guardians at the last known address and alert key services to locate the student
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct attendance code to use

## 5.6 Reporting to parents

Parents can see their child's attendance at any time via the Classcharts app, however this is not live data. Copies of attendance certificates can also be provided on request from the school office.

Every child's current attendance for that year will also be included in their progress reviews.

## 6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

It is important to note that the fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means that the event could not be reasonably scheduled at another time.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveler pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travelers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveler family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport
- Exams etc

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in the appropriate leave request form available from school reception or on the school's website in advance.

### 6.2 Reducing persistent absence

Thomas Keble School is committed to promoting excellent attendance throughout the school. The target for all pupils is 100%.

[Appendix 2](#) sets out our internal systems for reducing persistent absence.

For those pupils and families who do not improve attendance, and for whom there are no other authorised reasons, a notice to improve, fine or penalty notice might be applied. (not clear in Appendix 2, also EWO referenced).

### 6.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents 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 must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices are issued by the local authority officer.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- 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 pupil 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.

If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

## 7. Strategies for promoting attendance

Rewards are regularly used to encourage good attendance. The following are some of the rewards (list not exhaustive) used by the school:

- At the end of term assemblies, the list of all pupils with 100% attendance will be displayed on the board and congratulated
- Year/ House assemblies will regularly display names of pupils with 100% attendance and celebrate their success.
- Notice boards displaying weekly data.

## 8. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

Parents must call on the morning of every subsequent day of illness

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving our Attendance Team.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

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.

Thomas Keble School uses SIMs and Classcharts to collect and store attendance data to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Track the attendance of groups of pupils
- Provide intelligence reports for pastoral staff so that students who need further support and intervention can be identified.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as needing intervention and support
- Monitor termly and annual attendance figures
- Report on attendance figures for Trustees
- Support the publication of attendance figures for Stakeholders

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by the SMT member responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full Trust board.

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- [Child protection and safeguarding policy](#)
- [Behaviour policy](#)
- [Attendance Policy Coronavirus Update \(July2020\)](#)
- All other relevant policies

#### Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Register Code	Description
/	Present AM

\	Present PM
L	Late (before registers closed) marked as present
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
C	Authorised absence as pupil is absent due to other authorised circumstances
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	Authorised absence as pupil is excluded, with no alternative provision made
I	Illness (NOT appointments)
M	Authorised absence due to medical/dental appointments
R	Authorised absence due to religious observance
S	Authorised absence due to study leave
T	Authorised absence due to traveller absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
B	Approved education activity as pupil being educated off site (NOT dual registration)
P	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending an approved sporting activity
V	Approved education activity as pupil is away on an educational visit or trip
W	Approved educational activity as pupil is attending work experience
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
G	Unauthorised absence as pupil is on a family holiday, NOT agreed, or is taking days in excess of an agreed family holiday
N	Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for a reason that has not yet been provided

<b>O</b>	<b>Unauthorised absence as pupil missed sessions for an unauthorised absence not covered by any other code/description</b>
<b>U</b>	<b>Unauthorised absence as pupil arrived after registers closed</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Dual registered (at another establishment - NOT counted in possible attendance</b>
<b>X</b>	<b>Not required to be in school - for non-compulsory school age children</b>
<b>Y</b>	<b>Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances - not counted in possible attendances</b>
<b>Z</b>	<b>Pupil not yet on roll - not counted in possible attendances</b>
<b>#</b>	<b>Planned whole or partial school closure - NOT counted in possible attendances</b>
<b>Q</b>	<b>Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements</b>
<b>Y1</b>	<b>Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available</b>
<b>Y2</b>	<b>Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel</b>
<b>Y3</b>	<b>Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed</b>
<b>Y4</b>	<b>Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed</b>
<b>Y5</b>	<b>Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention</b>
<b>Y6</b>	<b>Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law</b>
<b>Y7</b>	<b>Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause</b>



# Attendance Policy

Thomas Keble School

## Appendix 2 – Attendance Interventions

Level	Criteria	Action	Recording of Action	Further Action
No concern	Students above individual attendance target for year group	Termly attendance certificates for students with 100% attendance for term.  Weekly monitoring activities in tutor time	Via SIMS	N/A
Level 1 Tutor/Attendance Officer	Any one or a combination of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of a pattern of absence. This may include regular absence for a certain period of a week.</li> <li>• Unexplained or suspicious absence of over 2 days.</li> <li>• Student’s attendance is below 94%</li> </ul>	Attendance Officer send school Comms message to say the child is not in school, or rings home for confirmation of reason for absence on day 1 and day 2.  Attendance Officer to update SIMS and ask Tutor for support if needed.  Attendance Officer to make courtesy call on 3 <sup>rd</sup> day of absence	Attendance Officer to update SIMS  Tutor to inform Attendance Officer/ Head of Year of all conversations with parents by email  Tutor to speak to child and record notes	Attendance officer to continue to monitor student attendance.  Tutor to monitor attendance closely. Tutor to either ring parent again if attendance does not improve or refer to Attendance Team if attendance drops significantly.
Level 2 Tutor/Year Leader/Attendance Team	Any one or a combination of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student’s attendance is below 90%</li> <li>• Unexplained or suspicious absence.</li> <li>• Referral made by Tutor from Level 1 concern.</li> </ul>	Attendance Officer to contact parents concerning absence issues.	School to record actions for student file	School to monitor attendance closely. School to ring parent again if attendance does not improve.
		Attendance Officer send Stage 1 letter explaining attendance concern.	Record of letter to be placed in student file.  Meeting between tutor and student held if attendance does not improve	Stage 2 letter to be sent if attendance does not improve.

		Attendance Team send Stage 2 letter inviting parents in for meeting.	Record of letter to be placed in student file. School requests meeting with student and parents/guardians.	
Level 3 School Attendance Team	<p>Any one or a combination of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student’s attendance is below 86%.</li> <li>• Student’s attendance is still a significant concern after Level 1 and 2 interventions.</li> <li>• Serious unexplained or suspicious absence.</li> </ul>	<p>School to send a monitor letter</p> <p>School to arrange a home visit to investigate absences if no improvement after the letter.</p> <p>School to organise Attendance Improvement Meeting (AIM) with pupil, parents and Head of Year.</p> <p>Key Stage Leader/Assistant Head to be informed.</p> <p>Request formal ‘Notice to Improve’</p> <p>Instigate fine request through local authority</p> <p>Instigate legal proceedings</p>	<p>Letters to be placed in Linked Documents.</p> <p>AIM plan* to be uploaded to SIMS linked documents.</p>	School to refer to Education Inclusion Service for consideration of legal action.

