

715E

Education Attendance Policy (England)

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Related Policies and Guidance Documents	712E Alternative Provision
Related Regulations	Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK Children missing education - GOV.UK Summary of responsibilities for children missing education Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
Annexes and Supplementary Info	
Responsible Person	Sara Forsyth
Document History	
Date	Revisions
January 2026	P1 KCSIE updated to 2025; P2 Attendance Register See page 4 added, links updated; P3 Further info links added

Education Attendance Policy – English Schools

School attendance approach at SENAD's schools

The DfE requires that schools should continue to clearly and consistently communicate the expectations around school attendance to families and any other professionals who work with the family. Any discussions should have a collaborative approach, focusing on the welfare of the child or young person and responding to the concerns of the parent, carer or young person. This conversation is particularly important for children with a social worker.

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all children and young people can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – students need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school and in turn, this leads to poor outcomes as adults. In addition, research shows that these children are vulnerable and at increased risk of exploitation.

This adverse impact on learning is more profound for children with an additional learning need who may face periods of exclusion from learning, due to not having the right setting for them, or periods of not engaging due to anxiety and their underlying mental health and disability.

There is a strong correlation between attendance and progression for students. Periods of absence disrupts the rhythm of learning and prolonged patterns of absence or lateness for lessons can result in significant under achievement and diminished life chances in adulthood. Absence from education can also signify safeguarding issues around the absent student's welfare and safety.

To improve the life chances of young people in our schools, SENAD will:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Act early to address children missing from education.

The DfE attendance guidance is: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK](#)

Accordingly, SENAD and its schools expects:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents/guardians to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age (Year Groups 1-16) who are registered at school attend regularly;• Attendance targets will typically be set at 95% (for compulsory phases) unless there is a structured attendance plan to the contrary; and• All students to be punctual to their lessons. |
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What does the law say and what do parents have to do?

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect those laws and the guidance produced by the Departments for Education in England. The legislation is set out in the following regulations as follows:

In England, for Alderwasley Hall, Bladon House, Edgewood, Maple View, Pegasus and Rowden House schools, this is set out in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

For English Schools, this policy also meets the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 policy framework. [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)
Each school within the SENAD Group of Schools has developed its own approach to managing attendance but this policy provides the framework for their approaches.

Admissions and Attendance Registers

The law requires all schools including independent schools to have an admission register and, except for schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register. These registers **must** be kept electronically and regularly backed up. All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on the admission register and have their attendance recorded in the attendance register. The proprietor of a school who fails to comply with these regulations is guilty of an offence and can be fined.

Admission Register ('the school roll')

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with their starting date, information regarding parents, and details of the school last attended. Full details of what should be recorded in the admissions register can be found here:

[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024 Chapter 7](#)

A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies

Attendance Register

Schools must also take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether each registered pupil is physically present in school or, if not, the reason they are not in school by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. (See Page 4)

Full details can be found here

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) Chapter 8](#)

Every entry in the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

Floor targets – and action plans

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. All schools should work to create a culture where 100% school attendance is an expectation. Senior leaders should work together with pupils and their families to address issues of poor attendance. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Senior staff will also be mindful of the medical and mental health needs of pupils that might make 100% attendance challenging. For further guidance around this please see [Working together to improve school attendance](#) Page 23

Due to the small numbers of students in SENAD school's attendance targets will be differentiated to meet the ongoing needs of individual students. The school will, however, also look at whole school issues within their individual context.

The school will review attendance against the benchmarks detailed in their school policy. It is expected that senior staff regularly collate and analyse attendance data to identify trends and highlight concerns. This information should be reported to Directors via the Headteacher's report. Intervention plans with regular reviews built in will be in place where attendance falls below expectations.

Safeguarding: Children Absent from Education

There is statutory duty on all Local Authorities in England to have systems and procedures in place to monitor Children Absent from Education. The school's children protection and safeguarding policy is linked to this attendance policy.

- Children absent from education, particularly persistently, can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse, and child sexual and criminal exploitation. It is important the school or college's response to children absent from education supports identifying such abuse and also helps prevent the risk of them being absent in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as with a child in need or on a child protection plan, or as a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Further information and support, includes:

- schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools **must** provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points can be found in the Department's statutory guidance: [Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools - GOV.UK](#)
[Summary of responsibilities for children missing education](#)
- further information for colleges providing education for a child of compulsory school age can be found in: [Full-time enrolment of 14- to 16-year-olds in further education and sixth-form colleges - GOV.UK](#)
- general information and advice for schools and colleges can be found in the document: [Missing Children and Adults strategy - GOV.UK](#)

Examples of those most at risk are:

- Young offenders
- Those with homeless parents or parents living in refuges
- Young people in public care
- Young people who are privately fostered
- Those who have been permanently excluded
- Those at risk of radicalisation (**see policy 507**)

Each local authority has a named contact for Children Absent from Education. We are aware of our responsibility to contact the named person in relation to any child / young person who fall into this category for whatever reason.

The golden rule in safeguarding needs to be followed:

If in doubt tell someone

Attendance Register Codes

To aid analysis for our placing Authorities, SENAD will use the national attendance codes as follows:

Official Registers Codes...	
Register Attendance Marks	
/ \	AM and PM attendance
L	Late before register closed ¹
B	Off-site educational activity (approved)
J1	Interview with prospective employer, school, college or for admission to another educational institution
P	Approved supervised sporting activity
V	Education visit or trip
W	Work experience
Authorised Absence Marks	
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
C1	Leave of absence authorised by Head Teacher for pupils to participate in a regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence for compulsory school age pupils subject to a part time timetable
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made
Q	Unable to attend because of access arrangements
I	Illness (not medical check-ups)
M	Medical or dental appointments ²
R	Religious observance (for designated groups)
S	Study leave for Year 11/12/13 pupils
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	Sessions that children of non-compulsory school age are not expected to attend
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

¹ Session will *typically* close 45 minutes after registration has started for the session

² The expectation is that they should be booked **outside** of school day where possible

Official Registers Codes...	
Y2	Unable to attend due to disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to unexpected closure of whole site
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice system
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Unauthorised Absence Marks	
G	Holiday not authorised by Head Teacher prior to being taken
O	Unauthorised absence for other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived into school after registration (L code) has closed
N	Reason for absence not yet provided (see below)

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided is typically NOT used

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a student's absence. When the reason for the student's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a student's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation due to unknown circumstances)

Schools should follow up with families if they are not satisfied with the reason as to why the pupil is not in school. Schools can request supporting evidence from the family. Where the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence, they may record this using one of the unauthorised absence codes, in the guidance document.

For full guidance to the above codes, including criteria to be used, please see [Working together to improve school attendance](#) Page 76

School days and academic holiday periods

Each SENAD school will set its own academic term dates; we teach 190 days a year which is 380 sessions. Each school will determine its school day/week to best meet the needs of the school's community. Term dates can be found on the school's website.

Typically, the Head Teacher will plan to align holiday periods with those of neighbouring Local Authorities as far as possible³.

Granting Leaves of Absence

Head Teachers still have the power to grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. School leaders are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 These circumstances are:

³ Where there is a misalignment, this is not an exceptional reason for a parent to not send their child to school. Children not present will be marked as unauthorised absence, in line with DfE and WAG guidance.

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- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA). (For full details please see Code C1)
 - Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
 - Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
 - A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable. (For full details please see part-time timetable)

Parents must seek permission to withdraw their child for a holiday from the Head Teacher before they take the holiday but typically, permission will not ordinarily be granted and any absence is likely to be recorded as unauthorised. (Code Mark G)

Parents can be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.