



# Muscliff Primary School

## School Attendance Policy

Approved by: FGB

Last reviewed on: July 25

Next review due by: July 28

## Our Vision and Values

Our school is a place where staff, directors and parents **actively work together** to ensure all children receive an **engaging, ambitious, rich curriculum to inspire thinking and promote deep sustainable learning**.

Children become **lifelong learners, aspiring to high standards of achievement** in **all** areas of their life.

Children are supported through a **strong set of enduring values** which will provide the **solid foundation** for children as they discover their own individual **role and responsibilities** within the wider world:

- Resilience: in the face of challenge
- Responsibility: for our own actions and learning
- Kindness: showing empathy towards others
- Curiosity: for lifelong learning in a rapidly evolving world
- Aspiration: for now and for the future

## Policy aims

This policy aims to safeguard children by ensuring that they attend school regularly and when they do not attend, school is aware of the reason for absence.

By law, parents are required to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are registered at school and attend regularly.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

**A parent includes any person who is not a parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996.**

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

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## 1) **General Principles**

In order for children to learn effectively and make maximum progress in school it is essential that they attend on time, regularly and consistently. We expect all children on roll to attend school every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make the school day a happy and rewarding experience for all children. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is supported by our policies on safeguarding, anti-bullying, behaviour and inclusion. It is also supported by our curriculum and by our expectation that all staff develop positive, supportive and caring relationships with the children with whom they have contact.

At Muscliff, we work hard to ensure that each individual child is at the heart of all we do. We will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and support them to try and resolve any difficulties. Equally, we recognise and acknowledge good attendance. Our expected level of attendance is at least 96%.

The recognition of the importance of good attendance is a central part of our ethos and day to day life and this is communicated to both parents and children by our whole school team; **attendance is everyone's responsibility.**

### **Why is regular attendance so vital?**

- There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and low achievement. Research shows that attendance level at primary school has a clear impact on achievement at all levels including GCSE level. This in turn affects children's wider life chances.
- Regular and consistent attendance significantly supports a child's development socially and emotionally as well as academically.
- Research shows that for the most vulnerable children, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

## 2) **Legislation and Guidance**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents>The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>It also refers to:

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

### 3) Arrival and Registration

**It is a parent's responsibility to contact the school, either by phone, at the school gate or by Parentmail, by 9am on the first day of a child's absence.**

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- present
- absent
- present at approved educational activity or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The register is taken twice a day (morning and afternoon). A day counts as 2 sessions of attendance.

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
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See Appendix 1 for attendance codes.

The school gates will open at 8.30am to allow children to come onto the playground and make their way into their classroom. The gates will close at 8.45am and morning registers will be taken at 8.50am. The afternoon register is taken at 1.00pm (KS1) and at 1.30pm (KS2). School finishes at 3.10pm for Reception children and 3.15pm for the rest of the school.

### 4) Lateness

Morning registration ends at **9.05am**. If a child arrives after 9.05am, they will be marked in as **Late**. After **9.15am** this will become an **unauthorised absence** unless there is a legitimate reason (authorised by the Head Teacher) and the school have received notification from a parent/carer. Emerging patterns of unauthorised absence could prompt legal action (see section 11 and 12).

It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside normal hours are signed in/out from the office. This record will be used in case of an emergency or fire drill.

### 5) Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent emails or telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Authorised absence may be granted under the following circumstances;

- Exclusion
- Days of religious observance
- Hospital or dental appointments (see section 6)
- Illness (see section 7)
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purpose where it has been agreed with the school has agreed this with the school
- A part time timetable, where it has been agreed with the school
- Other Authorised Circumstances. This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances and can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

See Appendix 1 for attendance codes.

## 6) **Hospital and Dental Appointments**

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, they should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Advanced warning should always be given to the school of a medical appointment.

## 7) **Illness**

**It is a parent's responsibility to contact the school, either by phone, at the school gate or by Parentmail, by 9am on the first day of a child's absence.**

If the office staff have not been notified, they will contact the child's parent/carer (Contact 1), in order to check on the safety of the child and to obtain a reason for absence.

If there is no answer from Contact 1, a message will be left if possible.

If school does not hear back in a reasonable amount of time, they will try Contact 1 again and then any other emergency contacts if there is no reply.

If they have not had a reason for absence by lunchtime, the senior leadership team will be informed and action taken as appropriate.

**If we do not know where a child is, this becomes a Safeguarding issue. If we have any concerns for a child's safety and wellbeing we will contact Children's Social Care, or conduct a home visit.**

The school office should be informed on the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning thereafter, if appropriate, until the child returns to school. Any unexplained absence will be marked as unauthorised.

**Please ensure that school has at least 3 emergency contact numbers for your child and that they are up to date.**

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. In some specific circumstances, or if the authenticity of any illness is in doubt, the school may ask the child'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.

If a child has an ongoing medical problem, we would ask you meet with school to provide information and explore strategies the school can employ to support maximum attendance.

If a child is 'persistently absent' or 'severely absent' (see section 10) due to a number of illnesses then the school may request evidence of GP appointments in order to authorise the absences.

If illness causes a child to be away from school for a long term period the school may arrange with parents to send work home, if appropriate. A reintegration programme, sensitive to an individual's needs, may be planned for children who have been absent for a longer term.

## 8) Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher

Absences that **will not** be authorised by the Head teacher include, but are not restricted to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"/child is tired
- An absence that has never been properly explained.
- Holiday in term time

Any child who is absent for 10 days or has failed to start attending or return to school after a school holiday will be reported to the Local Authority as a child missing in education (CME).

Under the new guidance (August 2024), schools must consider a penalty notice for any children who have accrued 10 unauthorised absences (equivalent to 5 days) in a rolling period of 10 weeks (see section 12).

See Appendix 1 for attendance codes.

## 9) Holidays/Leave of Absence in Term Time

**Schools are not permitted to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Any term time leave of absence requests need to be submitted to the Headteacher in writing on **our 'application for absence' form (see Appendix 2)** with the exceptional circumstances explained. The Headteacher will then consider the request and make a decision as to whether the request is granted and the leave authorised.

A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the child is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request, and apply the policy fairly and consistently.

### **Process for requesting absence in term time**

- Applications must be made by a parent normally residing with the child.
- Parents should seek permission for authorised holiday absence before making firm bookings/arrangements/payments for your holiday.
- Applications should be made in writing **on our 'application for absence' form (see Appendix 2)** in advance and sent to the school office.
- Absence will not be granted retrospectively unless in exceptional circumstances.
- If the Headteacher authorises the absence, this will be noted on the school system.
- If the absence is not authorised, parents will be informed in writing or by email, or phone call if appropriate.

**Parents who decide to take a holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child and could result in the issue of a fixed penalty fine or in more serious cases other legal action. In this case, parents/carers will be notified in writing and by email.**

**Work will not be set for completion during an unauthorised holiday as it is our expectation that the children are attending school during this time.**

Parents needing exceptional circumstances to be considered for absences longer than ten days within one academic year should make an appointment to discuss this with the Headteacher well in advance.

#### **10) Persistent Absence (PA) and Severe Absence (SA)**

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

The school will monitor and use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence. Parents of persistently absent and/or severely absent children will be contacted, either by the Deputy Headteacher (Emma Huns) or our Independent Education Social Worker (Alyson Hammond-Forge). We expect parents to work with school to identify barriers to their child's regular attendance and adopt a problem solving approach with school support where possible. We will work with families to identify barriers and offer support where we can. This may include signposting or accessing wider support services. School will communicate either by phone or in writing and offer face to face meetings to encourage work in partnership with parents.

Whilst we will apply our policy fairly and consistently, we will ensure we always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families with consideration of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

An attendance contract may be used to address irregular attendance. This is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school and is designed to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution.

It is the Government expectation that persistent and/or severe absence that does not improve should be considered for prompt legal action from the Local Authority (see sections 11 and 12).

#### **11) Legal Action**

The Local Authority can take legal action under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for poor attendance. This can result in an Education Supervision Order, Attendance Prosecution or a Parenting Order. Alternatively, a fixed penalty notice can be issued if appropriate; these are issued in line with the BCP Code of Conduct that can be found on the BCP website.

Legal action can be taken for any of the following reasons:

- Deliberate unauthorised absences
- Holiday during term time
- Persistent late arrival after registration has closed.
- An emerging pattern of unauthorised absence (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 weeks)
- Where any excluded child is found in a public place within 5 days of the exclusion period.

#### **12) Fixed penalty notices and Notices to Improve**

Fixed Penalty notices can be served on parents as an alternative to prosecution. The Government are clear that penalty notices **must** be considered for the reasons listed in section 11.

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

- The barriers and challenges to attendance that a family/child faces and whether they have engaged with support offered
- 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

## **There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.**

Each parent can receive a fine of £80 (if paid within 21 days) or £160 (if paid between day 22 and 28) in relation to each child for unauthorised leave of absence. This is for the first penalty notice within a 3 year period.

If during a 3 year period, a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent(s) with respect to the same child (ren) the parent must pay £160 within 28 days.

Payment of the notice offers the individual (s) the opportunity to discharge any liability to conviction of the offence. However, if the fine is not paid within 28 days, the LA has the right to prosecute.

Fines per parent will be capped to 2 fines in any 3 year period. If the parent meets criteria for a penalty notice for a third time in the 3 year period, the government specify that legal action must be considered.

### **A fixed penalty notice will be issued in line with the BCP's code of conduct**

**(<https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/Assets/Schools-and-learning/BCP-Code-of-Conduct-applies-from-19-08-24.pdf>) and the DfE's 'Working together to improve school attendance.'**

**A parent includes any person who is not a parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. As stated in the BCP code of conduct "Penalty notices will usually be issued to the parent or parents with day to day responsibility for the pupil's attendance or the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence)". Depending on circumstances, this could apply to split parents and/or step-parents/carers.**

**If a parent with parental responsibility does not agree with their child's absence (for example, for a term time holiday with the other parent) they should inform the school in writing or by email (ahead of the absence where possible) in order for their views to be considered.**

Please see Appendix 3 – Helping Parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays (from BCP).

### **Notices to Improve**

For a pattern of unauthorised absence, if grounds for a penalty notice have been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the BCP code of conduct.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

### **Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)**

**Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the local authority a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. BCP will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.**

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an ESO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

### **13) Strategies for promoting attendance**

School staff will actively encourage good attendance with parents and children through our everyday interactions. We will communicate regularly with parents through the newsletter, on the website and if necessary, through direct contact. We may, on occasion, use praise for individuals but will be mindful of it being used sensitively and without discrimination.

### **14) Reporting to parents/carers**

School will report regularly on their child's attendance record, or more frequently if there is a concern.

### **15) Attendance Monitoring and Analysis**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request. The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

In analysing attendance, the school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

In using the data to improve school attendance, the school will

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
  - Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 10)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including Becca Lewis, SENCo & Assistant Head) and designated safeguarding leads.

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

## 16) **Roles and Responsibilities**

### a) **The Role of Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time unless their child is too ill to attend or they have permission for an absence from the school.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with at least 3 emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
  - Ensure that holidays are booked during the school holidays.
  - Engage with the school where there are barriers to attendance (e.g medical or SEND issues) in order to promote maximum attendance for their child.

Staff contacts for day to day concerns about attendance: Office Staff, Class teachers, Senior Leadership Team, Attendance Lead (Emma Huns), SLT administrator (Charlotte Blanch).

Contacts for more detailed support on attendance are: Headteacher (Sarah Fenby), Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Lead (Emma Huns), Assistant Head and SENCo (Becca Lewis), Alyson Hammond-Forge (Independent Education Social Worker).

Please call/pop into the main office and they will ensure you are able to talk to the relevant member of staff.

### b) **The Role of the Directors (Governors)**

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- If the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance

- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - o The importance of good attendance
  - o That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - o The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - o The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

Our link governor for attendance is David Banks.

### **c) The Role of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Independent Education Social Worker**

The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising SLT administrators/Independent Education Social Worker to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

The Head Teacher/Deputy Headteacher/Education Social Worker will monitor the attendance of children in school, including our most vulnerable children, to ensure that all groups of children are able to have access to the exciting educational opportunities provided for them at Muscliff. They will work alongside class teachers, the SEN team and office staff to do this. See Section 15 for further detail.

The Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher/Education Social Worker (on behalf of the board of directors at Muscliff Primary) will provide the local authority with relevant information for a penalty notice be issued to parents (or to instigate prosecution) for an unauthorised holiday in term time or where it is noticed through our ongoing monitoring that there is an emerging pattern of unauthorised absence.

### **d) The Role of Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance**

**The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Emma Huns (Deputy Headteacher) and can be contacted via the school office.**

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers. This may be alongside the SENCo.
- 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 our independent education social worker to tackle persistent and severe absence

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Emma Huns (Deputy Headteacher) and can be contacted via telephone (01202 549654) or by email [office@muscliffprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@muscliffprimary.co.uk).

#### **e) The Role of the SLT administrator**

**Our SLT administrator is Charlotte Blanch and she can be contacted through the school office.**

The SLT administrator will;

- Inform parents by letter or email as the Headteacher's decision on whether an absence request is authorised.
- Keep records of correspondence between school and parents about unauthorised term time absence.
- Send out Attendance Letters/ make calls as directed by the Head Teacher/Deputy Headteacher.
- In the case of any legal action, send the relevant correspondence from school to the Local Authority
- In the case of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice, send the relevant correspondence from school to the Local Authority
- Report to the Local Authority any child who is absent for 10 days or has failed to start attending or return to school after a school holiday as a child missing in education (CME).
- Ensure attendance returns are submitted to the local authority as per DfE guidance.
- Support the designated senior leader with attendance monitoring.

#### **f) The Role of Office Staff**

Office Staff will:

- monitor registers on a daily basis.
- Ensure the correct codes are recorded on the registers (see Appendix 1 for attendance codes).
- Check for absence notification and change any unauthorised absence codes if a message has been received
- If no message has been received by 9:00am, office staff will ring child's contact numbers as soon as possible in order to check on the safety of the child and to obtain a reason for absence.
- Alert SLT if no contact has been made and we are unaware of a child's whereabouts. This may prompt a home visit with a member of SLT as part of our Safeguarding processes.
- Report persistent lateness or any concern about absence patterns to SLT.

#### **g) The Role of the Class Teacher**

- Ensure and accurate record of attendance is taken at each registration period.

- Ensure registration is finished by 9.05am in the morning and within 5 minutes in the afternoon.
- Monitor the attendance of children in their class.
- Engage with children in their class on the importance of regular attendance.
- Work with parents as appropriate to identify barriers to attendance and offer support.
- Report persistent lateness or any concern about absence patterns to SLT.

#### **h) The Role of Teaching Assistants**

- Report any reasons for absence given to them by 9am.
- Support the Class teachers in promoting good attendance for all children

**Any member of staff should notify a Child Protection Officer (or any member of SLT) if they become aware of an unexpected pupil absence during the course of the school day. This will be investigated immediately to ensure the safety of the child.**

#### **17) Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from BCP and/or the DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

**Policy reviewed: July 2025**

**Next review due: July 2026**

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>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)

E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays



## School application for leave of absence during term time



Parents/carers must ask permission for their child to Headteacher's discretion to decide if the absence will for leave only in exceptional circumstances. If leave is parent/carer(s) risk being issued with a Penalty Notice wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete this form and return it to Muscliff Primary School for consideration.

be absent during term time, and it is at the be authorised. The Headteacher may authorise absence taken without permission, or no application is made, or being prosecuted on their return. Parent/carer(s)

<b>Child's name:</b>					
<b>Date of birth:</b>		<b>Year group:</b>		<b>Class / tutor group:</b>	
<b>Parent(s)/carer(s) name(s):</b>					
<b>Child's address:</b>  <b>Include parent's address if different from child:</b>					
<b>Telephone number:</b>		<b>Email address:</b>			
<b>Reason for request:</b>					
<b>Date of first day of absence:</b>				<b>Date of return to school:</b>	
<b>Parent/carer signature/s:</b>					
<p><b>Should the request not be approved, but the leave still taken, the Headteacher will decide whether grounds are met to refer to BCP for prosecution. Further information can be found in the BCP Code of Conduct, available on the BCP website. A Penalty Notice could be issued in lieu of a prosecution by BCP Council on your return, incurring a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. If this is a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent are capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.</b></p> <p><b>If the Penalty Notice is not paid BCP Council will consider prosecution proceedings under s.444(1) or 444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted, sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to 3 months, and you will have a criminal record.</b></p> <p><b>Please note that Penalty Notices can be issued per parent, per child. As stated in the BCP code of conduct "Penalty notices will usually be issued to the parent or parents with day to day responsibility for the pupil's attendance <u>or</u> the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence.</b></p> <p><b>If a parent with parental responsibility does not agree with their child's absence (for example, for a term time holiday with the other parent) should inform the school in writing or by email (ahead of the absence where possible) in order for their views to be considered.</b></p>					

## Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays/unauthorised absence.

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools **after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024**.

### Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

### National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be: £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

### Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.

### Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court. If convicted, sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to 3 months, and you will have a criminal record.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.