



# Attendance Policy

Date	July 2024
Review	September 2025

At Mile Oak Primary School, we pride ourselves on our commitment to strong pastoral care and know that students achieve well in all areas of the school when they feel supported, cared for and have professionals they can talk to when they need extra help.

We know we are most successful in working with students who attend school regularly and can demonstrate that, “it takes a village to raise a child”. The partnerships we create with families to support student attendance are crucial.

We aim to do this in a transparent and compassionate way. We expect children to attend school. We will take a graduated approach to supporting children and families.

## **Statement of Intent**

Mile Oak Primary School believes that regular school attendance is essential in enabling pupils to achieve their full potential.

Our objective is to:

- Ensure parents/carers follow the framework set out in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age, shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Promote and model good attendance behaviour.
- Implement our policies to reflect inclusivity and fairness in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Offer early intervention support and work with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

## **The Law on School Attendance**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to receive a full-time education, it is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to ensure this. Where parents/carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly and punctually, meaning that their child must attend every day that the school is open. There are a few exceptions, such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) (applies from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/1000) (applies from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

## **Definitions**

**Authorised Absence** (this list is not limited to):

- An absence for sickness, where your child is too ill to attend school. If you are unsure, please contact the school for advice.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time. You will be asked to provide proof of all medical appointments

- Religious or cultural observances for days set aside by a religious body, for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency, taken with the school's permission

**Unauthorised absence** (this list is not limited to):

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained or evidenced
- Arrival at school after the close of registration which is 9.20am
- Absence due to unofficial responsibilities at home
- Absence due to birthdays
- Absence due to term-time trips and holidays that have not been authorised by the school
- Leaving school without reason/the school's permission during the day

**Persistent absenteeism:**

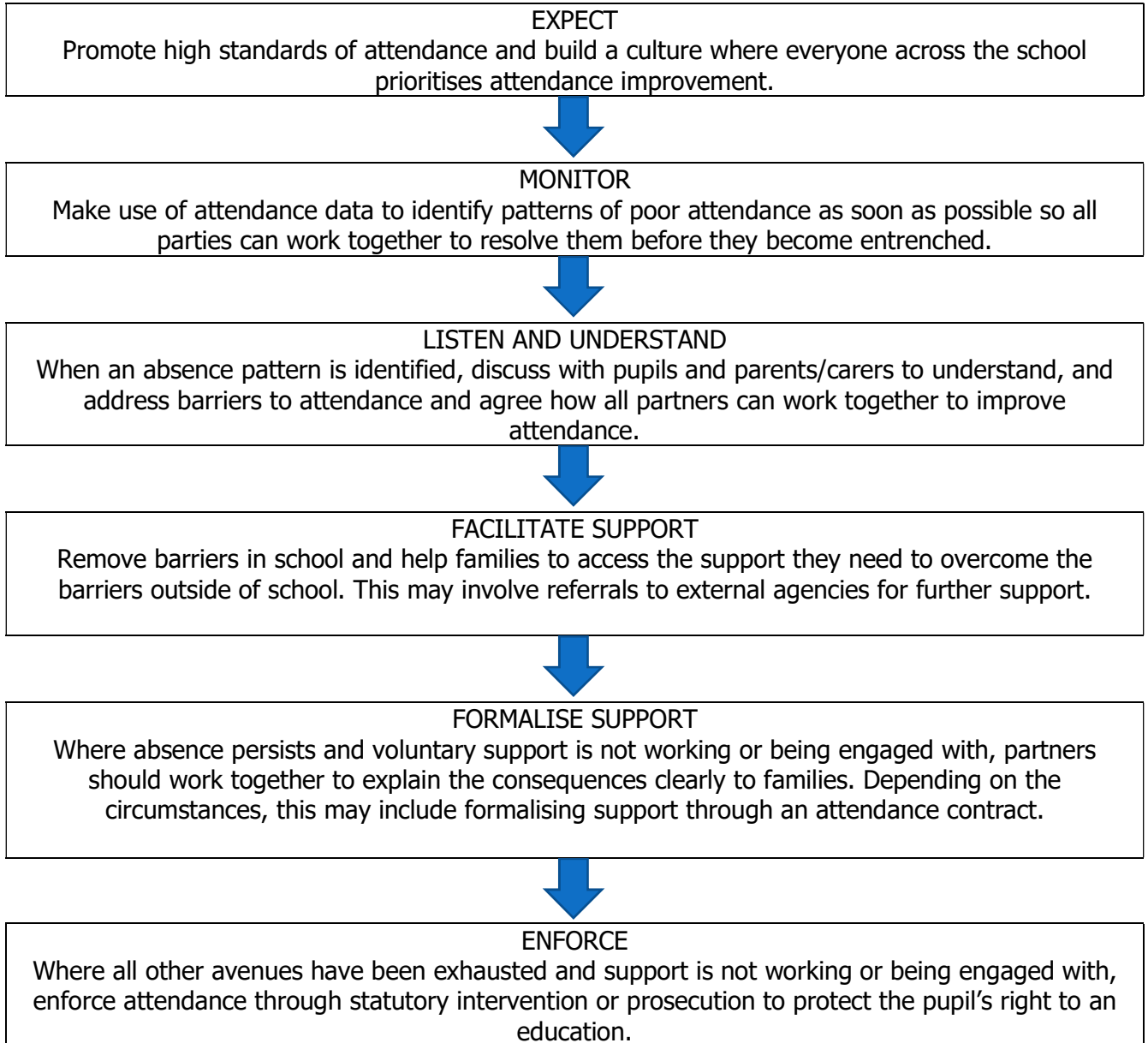
- Children are expected to be in school on time every day. If your child misses 10 percent (20 days) or more of schooling during the academic year, for any reason, this will be managed as persistent absenteeism.

**Severe absenteeism:**

- Children are expected to be in school on time every day. If your child misses 50 percent (98 days) or more of schooling during the academic year, for any reason, this will be managed as persistent absenteeism.

### **Working in partnership to improve attendance.**

Addressing the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with families:



### **Parent/Carer involvement**

The school will strive to build positive and respectful relationships with parents/carers to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance, and performance, so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will always liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support and report attendance, e.g. social services.

### **Parents/carers will be expected to:**

- Build positive and respectful relationships with school staff
- Engage with school support when offered
- Call staff for help when needed, telephone 01273 077114 or email office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk
- Communicate with the school about possible circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support
- Inform the school of any change of address and ensure contact details are up-to-date
- It is an expectation that you contact the school each day of your child's absence, providing a reason which should include symptoms
- If the school has not received a reason for your child's absence by 8.40am. Further safeguarding action will be taken for example, visiting the child's home address or contacting Social Services

### **What do the numbers actually mean?**

In a perfect world everyone would be in school for the full 190 days every year.

Without missing any days, the children would achieve 100 percent attendance.

Being realistic we understand that children sometimes get ill, therefore we aim for 100% but understand that attendance of 96 percent or above is acceptable.

In an exam most people would be happy to get 80 or 90 percent. However, when talking about attendance these figures actually mean children have missed a significant amount of days learning. And the number of days missed gets bigger for each percentage as the year progresses.

If attendance is at ...	by the end of Autumn Term (out of a total of 70 days) your child has missed ....	by the end of Spring Term (out of a total of 60 days) your child has missed ....	by the end of Summer Term (out of a total of 60 days) your child has missed ....
100%	0 days of learning	0 days of learning	0 days of learning
96%	3 days of learning	5 days of learning	7.5 days of learning
95%	3.5 days of learning	6.5 days of learning	9.5 days of learning
90%	7 days of learning	13 days of learning	19 days of learning
86%	10 days of learning	18 days of learning	27 days of learning
80%	14 days of learning	26 days of learning	38 days of learning
50%	35 days of learning	65 days of learning	95 days of learning

*Please note figures are rounded to nearest day/half day*

If a child is sitting with attendance around 90% by the end of the year they have missed almost 4 weeks (a month) in school.

It stands to reason that by missing more days in school children make less academic progress than their classmates who attend regularly. Not coming to school has a negative impact on the progress children are making in their learning. By missing out on regular schooling some children are having to constantly try to play catch up. Having chunks of knowledge missing really disadvantages children compared to their classmates (for instance if they miss out the lesson that

explain what a fraction is they will really struggle when they start doing calculations involving fractions with different denominators).

By not attending school regularly children also miss out on spending time with their friends. Infrequent attendance can have a negative impact on children's friendships. Being absent from school can increase anxieties and have a detrimental effect on children's mental health due to the fact that friendship groups move on while they are away from school. This issue can be overcome by simply ensuring children attend school every day.

## **Attendance expectations at Mile Oak Primary School**

### **Punctuality**

Children are expected to be at school every day, on time.

The register is taken at 8.50 every day

<b>Doors Open</b>	<b>End of School Day</b>	
8.40	KS1	3.15
	KS2	3.20

### **Registers are taken as follows:**

- Gates open at 8.40 am until 8.50 am
- Registers are marked at **8.50 am**. Pupils will receive a late mark ('L' code - late) if they are not in their classroom by this time
- The register closes at **9:20am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence ('U' code – unauthorised absence) if they do not attend school before this time.

Any children arriving late must enter the school via the front office with their parent/carer and the check in process must be completed including providing a reason for the late arrival

Poor punctuality disrupts the entire class and impacts your child's learning. Lessons start at 8.50am each morning so if your arrives child late they will miss this. Please see table below.

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

### **Sickness**

If children are too unwell to attend school, parents/carers must contact the school Absence Line on 01273 077114 on each day of absence by 8.40am. Children with low-level illness are still expected to attend school. The traffic light guidance below may help you decide if your child is

well enough to come into school. Please also see NHS guidance here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

If your child has a medical condition that could impact school attendance, please let us know so we can arrange a supportive conversation with a staff member

<b>RED – STAY AT HOME</b> <b>Sickness &amp; Diarrhoea</b>  Must have ceased and your child eating & drinking before a child can return to school.	<b>AMBER – COME TO SCHOOL AND COMMUNICATE WITH STAFF</b>  <b>Headache, Feeling Sick, Stomach Ache</b>  Children often feel unwell if they are anxious, if in doubt contact the school for advice.	<b>GREEN – COME TO SCHOOL</b>  <b>Mild cough, Cold, Sore Throat, Feeling Tired</b>  We will always contact you if your child is ill during the school day
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If your child needs medication, we can administer this in school. Please contact the office to complete a medical form.

If your child is ill, please inform the school by:

- Calling the school absence line – 01273 077114
- Emailing school – [office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk)
- This must be done by 8.40 am on the first day of absence and every subsequent day your child is absent from school

### **Appointments**

- In accordance with DfE guidance, routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside of school hours wherever possible. If the appointment time allows your child to come to school for registration and then leave later, this will mean that less school is missed. Your child should return to school straight after their appointment wherever possible. You will be asked to provide proof of all medical appointments

### **Term time holidays**

The DfE statutory guidance states that "Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation, to be an exceptional circumstance." It also states that "a school cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively."

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are where requests are rare, significant, unavoidable and short.

For term-time absence to be granted:

- a) Permission must be requested at least two weeks before the absence begins.
- b) Permission must be requested by the parent/carer who the pupil normally lives with.
- c) A parent/carer must complete a Leave of Absence request form (see Appendix 1) explaining why they believe the circumstances to be exceptional and provide all necessary evidence to the school at the time the request is made.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to provide evidence when making the request.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

A term-time absence taken without the school's written permission may trigger a Fixed Penalty Notice, which is issued by the Local Authority.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

The national threshold for triggering a Fixed Penalty Notice is met when a pupil has been recorded as having had unauthorised absence for 10 or more sessions (5 or more school days) in a period of 10 school weeks. One or a combination of the following codes count as unauthorised absence:

- G-codes (unauthorised term-time holiday)
- N-codes (no reason yet provided for absence)
- O-codes (poor attendance)
- U-codes (lateness after close of registration)

The first fine is £160 *per parent/carer per child*, if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

If a second fine is issued to that parent/carer within a period of 3 school years, the fine is £160 *per parent/carer per child* to be paid within 28 days and there is no reduction if paid within 21 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child, within 3 years of the first fine being issued. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action could be taken, such as prosecution.

There is no right of appeal once a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, so disputes over how an absence is classified must be settled with the school before the absence is taken.

Full details relating to Fixed Penalty Notice amounts and thresholds can be found in the Code of Conduct on the Brighton & Hove City Council website.



### **Religious observances**

Absence will be granted on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parents/carers belong to. Parents/carers must have notified the school in advance.

### **Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities**

Parents/carers of pupils that will be taking part in entertainment/performances, (i.e. modelling, TV, films, theatre, etc) which require them to be absent from school, must obtain permission from the school before a child performance licence can be issued. The agent, organiser or parent/carer will usually be the person who requests the absence from the school. Further information regarding licensing legislation can be found here: [England Performance Legislation - NNCEE - National Network for Children in Employment & Entertainment](#). For more information, please visit Brighton & Hove City Council's website: [Apply for a child performance licence \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#) or contact [childperformancelicensing@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:childperformancelicensing@brighton-hove.gov.uk).

### **Young carers**

Schools will provide a caring and flexible approach to support the needs of young carers, to help maintain regular attendance at school, which is the priority for all children. Further support from other agencies will be sought, if appropriate.

### **Absence protocols**

On each day of absence, parents/carers must contact the school via phoning the absence line on 01273 077114 or emailing [office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk) by 8.40 am.

If the school has not received a reason for your child's absence by 8.40am. Further safeguarding action will be taken for example, visiting the child's home address or contacting Social Services

The school will check messages, emails and voicemails for any notifications of pupil absence and will update registers with reasons for absence. It is essential that you provide a reason and symptoms for your child's absence at the initial point of contact

### **Attendance Contacts**

Please contact the school to discuss any potential support that can be offered. This can be either by phoning the school office on 01273 077114 or emailing [office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk)

### **Class Teachers**

- Teachers take the attendance register **at the start of each school day** and **at the start of the afternoon session**. This register will record whether a pupil is present or absent.

## **Attendance Champion**

- Attendance Champion, Mr Lording, Headteacher. [office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk](mailto:office@mileoak.brighton-hove.sch.uk)
- Responsible for improving and maintaining good attendance, establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, ensuring they are followed by all staff
- Responsible for regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Ensures the Attendance Policy is fully implemented
- Conducts home visits for any child who is absent for 3 or more consecutive days
- Ensure there is a whole school approach to improving attendance. This could include an 'Attendance display' and regular attendance items in Newsletters

## **Attendance Officer**

The Attendance Officer will:

- Check email, phone messages and absence reporting systems and update registers accordingly
- Oversee first day absence protocols
- Oversee attendance processes
- Conduct attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance and provide additional support
- Provide parents/carers with 'Leave of Absence Request Forms' when requested (see appendix 1)
- Ensure attendance processes are integrated throughout the school
- Maintain an attendance tracking system
- Verify that a parent/carer's contact details are up to date

Where a pupil at risk of Persistent Absenteeism (PA) is also at an increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. Social Services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

## **The Local Authority**

- Has an Attendance Team that work with schools in the city to help identify barriers to attendance when necessary
- Monitors local attendance data
- Offers opportunities for schools in each area to share best practice
- Can provide information/signposting for support services for pupils identified as persistently or severely absent (or at risk of becoming so)
- Works jointly with the school to provide formal support options and legal processes
- Will, where there are safeguarding concerns, facilitate joint working between the school, children's social care and other statutory safeguarding partners where necessary
- Can, where support is not appropriate (e.g. term time holidays) or being engaged with, enforce attendance through legal intervention and Fixed Penalty Notices

## **The School Governing Body**

- Work with senior leaders to set strategic goals or areas of focus for school attendance, providing support, and challenge, where necessary
- Review attendance data at board meetings (including school-level trends and benchmarking with other schools)
- Pay particular attention to pupil cohorts that have poor attendance, have had poor attendance historically, or face entrenched barriers to attendance. For example, pupils:
  - With a social worker
  - From a background where attendance has been a concern
  - With a long-term medical condition
  - With special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
  - With Free School Meals eligibility
  - Analyse the school's absence and attendance rates

## **Staff training**

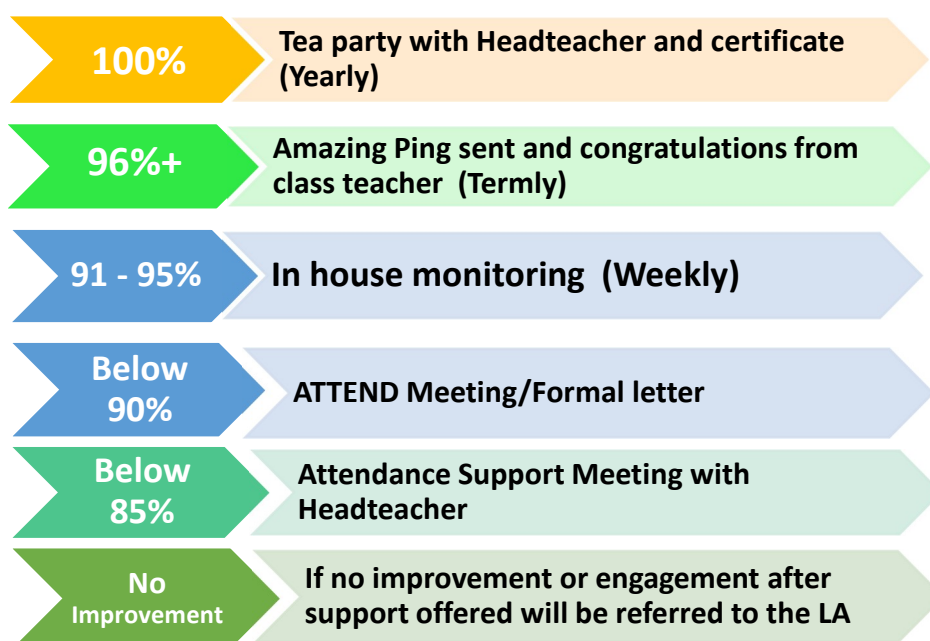
All school staff are expected to promote a focus on attendance and recognise the importance of early intervention. As part of their induction and refresher training, staff will be able to identify potentially "at-risk" pupils and understand that absence can indicate wider issues requiring support. If support is unsuccessful or not engaged with, all staff will be aware of escalation processes.

## **Pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA)**

The school will ensure it offers support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary.

## **Monitoring and review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target for every child is a minimum of **96%**



Appendix 1

Term Time Absence Request Form

<https://www.mileoschool.co.uk/key-information/attendance/>