



# Attendance Policy

At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford the named persons with responsibility for Attendance are:

Author	Miss B Allen
SLT	Mr G Thompson
Governor	Ms G Martin
Designated LAC	Mr J Felton
HoS	Mr P Lavender, Mr N Stone, Mr J Felton



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## 1. Aims

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

- Promoting good 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 to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. 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](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 The Governing Body

The governing body 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.

### 3.2 The Assistant Head and headteacher

They are responsible for:

- 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.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **3.3 Heads of School and Pastoral Support Lead**

They are responsible for:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Head/Headteacher.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the Assistant Head/Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

### **3.4 Form tutors**

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### **3.5 School Admin/Office Staff**

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **4. Recording Attendance**

### **4.1 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.
- 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 3 years after the date that the pupil leaves the school.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55 am and will be kept open until 9.15 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30 pm and will be kept open until 1.50 pm.

## **4.2 Unplanned Absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 10.00 am or as soon as practically possible (see also Section 7).

This should be done via an email to [reception@queenelizabeths.co.uk](mailto:reception@queenelizabeths.co.uk) and if this is not possible a call to 01507 462403.

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.

## **4.3 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. This should be done with 24 hours' notice.

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.

Typically, we would expect 2 weeks' notice to be given for planned absence with a request made in writing to the headteacher

## **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- The school will contact parents if there is persistent lateness not caused by school buses. Persistent lateness is defined as being late for 10% or more of possible sessions.

## **4.5 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 making an initial call to parents, and following up with an email, or home visit where there may be a safeguarding concern
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

## 4.6 Reporting to Parents

Attendance will be reported formally to parents via annual reports and parents can access up to date and on-going information about their child's attendance via the school intranet system, with their personal log on code

## 5. Authorised and Unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

Children and families have 175 days off school to spend together. 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.

We expect attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional and unavoidable reasons for absence.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as those situations which are unavoidable or significant events that are short in timescale.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account 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.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller 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

Other possible exceptional circumstances:

- Y11, Y12 and Y13 study leave as set by the school.
- Part time timetables agreed by the school for a period lasting no longer than 2 weeks (due to ongoing illness/anxiety).
- Death of a close family member/friend.
- Funeral of a close family member/friend.
- A housing crisis.
- Representing the country, region or county in sport or music.
- For the Lincolnshire Show as a participant, but not a visitor-evidence of participation will be needed.

Please note, the DFE, and therefore the school, does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of recreation or leisure to be an exceptional circumstance.

## **5.2 Reducing Persistent Absence**

A letter will be sent at the start of each new school year outlining expectations for attendance. Reference will be made that 100% attendance is the expectation and that anything under 90% is considered by law as persistent absence.

- Rewards given for 100% attendance via certificates on a termly basis and a gift for 100% attendance for the year, awarded on the last day during assembly.
- 100% - 97% 3 x a year a lottery drawn and 5 pupils receive a £20 Amazon voucher.
- 96% - 93% requires improvement. Initial tutor involvement and email or phone contact made to parents with a target made for improvement.
- 92% - 90% closer monitoring and letter home with invite for a parental meeting with HoS to set targets (Attendance Plan).
- Below 90% persistent absentee, which needs flagging to Pastoral Support Lead (PSL) and a letter of concern sent home inviting parents to come to an Attendance Panel Meeting led by HoS with PSL, and support offered. (Other agencies may be involved). Targets set.
- Attendance monitored and reviewed weekly by tutor, HoS and PSL. FPN issued if no improvement.
- No further improvement, then meeting with parents, Assistant Head, HoS and other agencies if needed. Targets set.
- NFI, meeting with Head and governor.
- NFI FPN issued by LA.

## **5.3 Legal sanctions**

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The National Framework for Penalty Notices for School Absences came into effect 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, and parents will be fined if a child has 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within a 10 week period. The fine is per parent, per child.

If issued with a penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days for the first time. The second time a Term Time Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be £160 to be paid with 28 days; there is no reduced rate. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police. The local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Third offences and any further offences (within 3 years) will not be issued a Penalty Notice and the case will be passed straight to the Magistrates Court. Magistrates can fine up to £2500 and where found guilty can show up on Parents future DBS checks as a failure to safeguard a child's education.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Rewards given for 100% attendance via certificates on a termly basis and a gift for 100% attendance for the year, awarded on the last day during assembly.
- 100%-97% 3 x a year a lottery drawn and 5 pupils receive a £20 Amazon voucher
- Students and parents have access to attendance records via the school intranet
- Reports are run off fortnightly and circulated to tutors, HoS, SLT by the Pastoral Support Lead to monitor
- The schools work with families and other agencies to support promoting attendance.

## 7. Attendance Monitoring

The Pastoral Support Lead at our school monitors pupil absence on a fortnightly 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).

A parent or carer must contact the school on each day of the child's absence.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider a support plan to improve attendance.

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.

The school uses its intranet and Integris to collect and store attendance data.

The school runs fortnightly reports on student attendance. This monitors those pupils who fall below 97% attendance with a particular focus on those who are persistent absentees (90% and below). See pyramid attached.

The Pastoral Support Lead will monitor those pupils who are in danger of falling below 90%, using the EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) pathway as and when needed. Support for pupils and parents will be identified and put into place. See pyramid attached.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by the Assistant Head (Pastoral). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.



## **9. Links with other Policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy

## Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance. For full explanation please refer to the [Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024](#)

/ - Present
B - Educated off site (NOT Dual reg.)
C - Other Authorised Circumstances
C1 - Authorised Regulated Performance
C2 - Temporary Reduced Timetable
D - Dual registration (attend elsewhere)
E - Excluded (no alternative provision)
G - Family holiday (NOT agreed)
I - Illness (NOT medical or dental)
J1 - Interview (employment or educational admission)
K - Alternative provision (LA arranged)
L - Late (before registers closed)
M - Medical/Dental appointments
N - No reason yet provided for absence
O - Unauthorised absence
P - Approved sporting activity
Q - Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements by LA
R - Religious observance
S - Study leave
T - Traveller absence
U - Late (after registers closed)
V - Educational visit or trip
W - Work experience
X - Non-compulsory school age absence
Y1 - Unable to attend (transport normally provided not available)
Y2 - Unable to attend (widespread disruption to travel)
Y3 - Unable to attend (part of the school closed)
Y4 - Unable to attend (whole school closed)
Y5 - Unable to attend (sentence of detention)
Y6 - Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7 - Unable to attend - any other unavoidable cause
Z - Pupil not on roll
# - Planned whole school closure

## Appendix 2: Attendance Pyramid

