Bilsthorpe Flying High Academy

Attendance Policy

Updated September 2026
Due for Review September 2027

Introduction:
This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.
Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole staff and has been drawn up in consultation with staff and governors.

School Aims:
This attendance policy ensures that all staff, governors and parents in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- To provide an environment in which all children feel safe, cared for and supported.
- To encourage independence and confidence to take risks and make their own decisions.
- That every child who walks out of the door at the end of Year 6 will have become the very best that they can be.

All our aims are encapsulated by our pledges to encourage:

- Responsibility
- Perseverance
- Aspiration
- Pride
- Fun
- Confidence
- Creativity

Vision Statement:
To provide every child in our care with the best quality education possible, in a warm, respectful and caring environment. Our children will be capable of dealing with the priorities of today as well as the unknown priorities of tomorrow. To put our school in the heart of the community and form links with that community which will benefit our children.

As a Thrive School, Bilsthorpe Flying High Academy embeds the Thrive Approach throughout our ethos, policies, and procedures. The Thrive Approach appreciates children's individual needs and understands that children's behaviour is a communication of an unmet need. We therefore approach all aspects of school with a nurturing and holistic vision, building strong relationships and ensuring children's emotional wellbeing is supported. It is essential that children feel safe, special and have their needs met to enable them to access their learning potential and build strong foundations to emotional resilience.

We expect all our children to attend school every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

At Bilsthorpe Flying High Academy, we aim to work in partnership with parents to ensure that:

- There is a culture of aspiration and relentless striving for excellence where learning is held in high esteem and celebrated.
- Pupils are punctual and prepared for lessons.
- Pupils value their education.
- Few pupils are absent or persistently absent and no groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance.
- The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is showing marked and sustained improvement.
- The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is rising quickly towards the national average.
- We develop supportive strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and reduce all absences.
- Work in partnership with the Local Authority to ensure good attendance of pupils to give them the best possible education.

Aims

We aim to:

- Take all reasonable steps to maximize attendance rates
- Actively discourage late arrival
- Be consistent in the application of the school's registration and attendance procedures

At Bilsthorpe Flying High Academy we consider

99% or better attendance	Excellent attendance
96% - 98.9% attendance	Good attendance
93% - 95.9% attendance	Attendance requires improvement
90% -92.9% attendance	At risk of becoming a persistent absentee
Below 90% attendance	Persistent absentee

Legal Framework

It is recognised that parents, schools and Local Education Authorities have statutory responsibilities with regard to school attendance.

Parental Responsibility

- Parents are required to ensure that their children receive efficient, full time education and are therefore primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school as outlined in section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Thus, parents are responsible for ensuring that their children:
  - Attend school regularly
  - Arrive at school on time, in uniform and in a condition to learn
  - Are absent only for reasons that can be authorized.
- Parents are required to inform the school of the reason for any absence and the likely return date, as soon as possible.

School Responsibility

- To regularly check and effectively monitor school attendance and to inform parents and Governors of their findings

Definitions:

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

Only the Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Sometimes, even if absence is supported by parent, an absence will be unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence
An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent.

Responsibilities
All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class Teacher
Class teachers are responsible for:

- Taking the daily register and reporting absences to the school office
- Noticing changes or patterns in attendance

Headteacher
The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall attendance for the school
- Tracking attendance statistics across our school and making comparisons to historical and national data
- Making decisions regarding actions to take where there is persistent absence or a problem with absenteeism or lateness.
- Liaising with Family Support Worker to keep up to date with support being provided and impact.

Administration staff
Administration staff are responsible for:

- First day calling and communicating with Family Support Worker/DSL/SLT where no contact has been made.
- Recording reasons for absences and marking whether this is an authorised or unauthorised absence.
- Receiving messages and passing on information regarding children's attendance.

Parents/ Carers
Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Parents are required to ensure that their children receive efficient, full-time education and are therefore primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school as outlined in section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Thus, parents are responsible for ensuring that their children:
- Attend school regularly
- Arrive at school on time, in uniform and in a condition to learn
- Are absent only for reasons that can be authorized.
- Parents are required to inform the school of the reason for any absence and the likely return date, as soon as possible.

Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- 100% and Excellent (96%+) individual attendance is celebrated each term with certificates and the opportunity to win a prize.
- The importance of attendance is promoted through the attendance policy, communication with children and families, assemblies and banners on the school drive.
- As a Thrive school, a relational approach is taken, building strong and safe relationships with both children and families with open communication to pre-empting early help and support.
- The "First Day Calling" procedures ensure that all children are accounted for if absence from school. SLT/DSL and Family Support Worker will carry out home visits if no contact is made.
- Parents, and children where appropriate, will be informed if attendance is at risk of Persistent Absence or at Persistent Absence. Attendance is monitored regularly, and letters are sent home.
- If there is no significant improvement following a first letter, parents, and children if appropriate, will be asked to meet with the Family Support Worker to discuss the barriers and support offered.
- The Family Support Worker uses the ATTEND Framework to give voice to all parties and an Attendance Plan may be offered where attendance is a significantly below target (below 80%). The plan may include referrals to agencies including Early Help.
- Where there continues to be persistent absence without improvement, no engagement from the family, or where unauthorised absences are more than 10 sessions over a 10 week period, parents will be informed that a request for a Penalty Notice has been sent to the Local Authority.

Registration

The school keeps an attendance register for each class in which pupils are marked present or absent at the beginning of each school session.

- The morning registration period is from 8.50am – 9.05am
- The afternoon registration period is from 1.00pm to 1.15pm.

Attendance is recorded directly onto Scholarpack by the class teacher and a daily absence list is collated by the school office following the procedure for unknown absences. This is shared with appropriate members of staff, including the Safeguarding team.

Lateness

We recognise that persistent lateness is:

- detrimental to the child's education
- administratively disruptive
- a poor preparation for future schooling and adult life.
- All pupils arriving after registration periods have ended have to sign in at the office.
- Pupils arriving within 20 minutes of registration closing will receive a late mark **L** and the minutes late will be recorded on Scholarpack.
- Pupils arriving more than 20 minutes after registration has closed will receive a **U** mark which is an unauthorised absence and the minutes late will be recorded on Scholarpack.
- If the reason for lateness beyond 9.20am/1.35pm is an exceptional circumstance as agreed by the Headteacher then code 'L' will be used.
- Parents whose children regularly arrive late will receive warning letters from school. If warning letters are ignored and punctuality does not improve, the child's parent will be invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher. Extreme cases may be referred to the Targeted Support Service.

Mid-Session Arrivals/Departures

- It is recognised that children may arrive or depart mid-session for a variety of reasons which may be authorised:
  - illness or accident in school resulting in a child going home
  - medical or dental appointments ○ unavoidable delays or reasons to leave early.
- Pupils present for registration who leave early, or for part of a session, will be noted in the *Pupil Signing In/Out Book* in the school office for purposes of emergency evacuation. *The register itself is not altered.*
- Pupils not present for registration who return later from an appointment will be noted in the *Pupil Signing In/Out Book* in the school office for purposes of emergency evacuation. The register is subsequently amended to authorise the absence or record an unauthorised absence.

Reporting Absence

- Parents are asked to make contact as soon as possible on the first day of absence, by telephone call or e-mail - informing the school of the reason for the absence and/or nature of any illness. They are also asked to inform the school if there is a likely return date. Parents are expected to call each day following the first day of absence to update school.
- Absences are noted as either authorised or unauthorised (see authorising absence below)
- If no contact has been made, the first day calling procedures will be followed to establish a reason for absence.

First Day calling procedures

- If the reason for a child's absence is unknown by 9.30am, the school office will call the first contact for the child on Scholarpack, if there is no answer, a text message is also sent to this contact
- If there is no contact following this, further contact numbers will be called
- If the office is still unsuccessful in establishing contact, a second text message will be sent informing the first contact that a safe and well being visit will be commenced if no contact
- If there is still no contact, a safe and well being visit will be carried out by a Senior member of staff/Designated Safeguarding Lead

Applications for Leave of Absence in Term Time

In September 2013 the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers **must not** give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any requests for term time leave should be made on a Leave of Absence Form available from the school office and handed in 4 school weeks before the first date of the requested absence whenever possible. You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. (Attendance code G).

The following codes are used to denote absence:

Code	Description:
Code / \:	**Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session** This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending. Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes.
Code L:	**Late arrival before the register is closed.** All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending
Code K:	**Attending education provision arranged by the local authority.** The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity
Code V:	**Attending an educational visit or trip** This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity
Code P:	**Participating in a sporting activity** This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity
Code W:	**Attending work experience** This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.
Code B	**Attending any other approved educational activity** The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. This code is classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.
Code D:	**Dual registered at another school** The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance to avoid double counting.
Code C1:	**Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code M:	**Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.** If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code J1:	**Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution** This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code S:	**Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination** This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code X:	**Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance
Code C2:	**Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable** In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, schools can temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school.
Code C:	**Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances**

	A leave of absence in term time should only be agree in Exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence
Code T:	**Parent travelling for occupational purposes.** The pupil is a mobile child (no fixed abode) and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. If there is genuine and reasonable doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence. For statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence
Code R:	**Religious observance** This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code I:	**Illness – Physical and Mental** (not medical or dental appointment) Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, medical evidence should be requested to support the absence.
Code E:	**Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Code Q:	**Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y1:	**Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y2:	**Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel** (caused by a local, national, or international emergency). This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y3:	**Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed**. This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y4:	**Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y5:	**Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code Y6:	**Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law**
Code Y7:	**Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.
Code G:	**Holiday not granted by the school.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence
Code N	**Reason for absence not yet established.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.
Code O:	**Absent in other or unknown circumstances.** Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised. This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence
Code U:	**Arrived in school after registration closed.** This code is classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.
Code Z:	**Prospective pupil not on admission register.** To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. This code is not collected for statistical purposes.
Code #:	**Planned whole school closure.** This code is not collected for statistical purpose

Absence will be authorised if evidence is provided that:

- the pupil was absent due to illness
- the pupil was prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause ○
- the pupil had leave of absence granted by the Headteacher
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong
- the absence was due to a medical or dental appointment – it is expected that appointments of this nature will only require 1 session of absence.

In addition, the school will consider authorising absence if evidence is provided for the following cases:

- family bereavement
- external music examination
- special tuition/events
- if the absence meets the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria which is defined as an unexpected or unforeseen circumstance that couldn't have been prepared for.

The school will not authorise absence in the following cases:

- shopping during school hours
- children looking after brothers and sisters
- children minding the house during school hours
- children avoiding aspects of the curriculum (games, swimming, visits, etc) whether condoned by parents or not.
- extended holidays that are linked to religious observance events.

At Bilsthorpe Flying High Academy we recognise that good attendance means…



Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least **96%.**

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns.

Bilsthorpe Flying High Academy offers a supportive, relational approach with access to our Family Support Worker, Thrive Practitioner and ELSA for in school support, and links to further support from other agencies able to deliver specific and specialised support. The ATTEND Framework is used to ensure the voice of all parties, including the child are heard and that any Attendance Plan created is holistic, supportive and achievable. Attendance Plans are shared with class teachers and other staff within school to take action to remove barriers and are regularly reviewed.

If a child's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of parental responsibility measures which include the issue of penalty notice fines or other statutory action.

National framework for penalty notices

The new national threshold for consideration of legal action is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, including lates after close of register (Attendance code U) and unauthorised leave in term time (Attendance code G).

If your child's absence falls into this category the school will decide if further offers of support is likely to improve the situation or if a request for legal action should be submitted to the Local Authority.

The new costs and process is outlined below:

- CONTROLLED First Offence - The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

- Second Offence (within 3 years) -The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

- Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years) - The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court.

Term time holidays

Pupils should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable. Schools are required to consider requests for leave of absence in term time and should only approve the leave if there are exceptional circumstances. If a request for leave is denied and the pupil is absent for 5 days or more

then the school is expected to refer the case to the LA. The LA will issue a penalty notice with no requirement for a formal warning to be issued. Penalty notices can also be issued where a pupil is absent for repeated incidents of unauthorised leave in term time that fall below the 5-day threshold. In every case, the request for the Penalty Notice comes in from the school to the LA for the process to be completed.

Missing Children in Education

Children are considered missing in Education should they have an unauthorised absence of more than 10 days and any attempts to contact the family have been unsuccessful. School office staff and SLT follow the Missing Children in Education procedures as in line with Nottinghamshire County Council guidelines.

Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance will be examined regularly to look for:

- low attendance
- persistent absence – lower than 90% attendance
- punctuality
- persistent lateness
- patterns of absence
- unexplained absences
- Where there are concerns regarding attendance, a letter will be sent in the first instance, offering support from the Family Support Worker and Head Teacher.
- If there is no improvement in the attendance, families will be invited in to meet with the Head Teacher and Family Support Worker to create an Attendance Plan using the ATTEND framework.
- Evidence of illness may be requested to authorise absences where children's attendance is significantly below 90%. Parents will be informed of this action by letter.
- Should the there still be no improvement, the Head Teacher will make the decision to make appropriate referrals to targeted services and enforcement with the local authority.

This policy will be reviewed and updated in line with the school Monitoring Cycle.

Complaints:

All complaints will follow the school's complaints policy.

Date: 07/09/2026

Signed Chair of Governors: L brimble .....

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Signed Headteacher: C Reynolds .....