



Iver Village Junior School

School Attendance – Working Together To Improve School Attendance 2025-2026

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| Version 8 – September 2024 | Attendance Champion not Leader Attendance Contract not Parent Code T Renamed Intro 1 - added Summary and find supportive routes to improve attendance Added increased fines - £80 / £160 Only grant leaves of absence for specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the 2024 attendance regulations |
| New Policy - June 2025 | New Policy – adopting Outline Attendance Policy – August 2024 – Buckinghamshire Council Removed the 5 Foundations Strategy to align more with Bucks |

This policy should be read alongside the statutory guidance: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118111/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-19-august-2024.pdf)

Next review Date – September 2026

Written by Paul Clifford

Aims and objectives

At Iver Village Junior School, we believe that improving attendance is everyone's business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, Buckinghamshire Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)
- [The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:55am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

The governing body are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most

- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Our link governor for attendance will meet with Mr Clifford to see how pupil attendance is being monitored.

The headteacher is 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The Senior Attendance Champion / School Attendance Officer - Mr Paul Clifford - is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Establishing and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff
- Having a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Senior Attendance Champion and the headteacher
- Working with school staff e.g. SLT / SENCo to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher and the school secretary when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information to the school office no later than the time the register is closed – 8:55am or as soon as possible after the register is completed.

School Secretary / Business Manager are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent

- 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 by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2024
- 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

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 8:55am and will be kept open until 9:25am but no longer than 30 minutes after registration takes place. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 12:30pm (Lower School) and 1:30pm (Upper School).

Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day by 8:55am or as soon as practically possible by calling or emailing the school office.

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.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late (Code L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent (Code U)

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. Evidence of the appointment is necessary.
- 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 headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as significant and unavoidable events that prevent a child from attending school, and that are not a result of routine or foreseeable situations. These circumstances are typically outside the control of parents and the school, and the decision to authorise an absence based on them rests with the headteacher.

- Examples of exceptional circumstances, which are not exhaustive, include:
- Serious illness or death of an immediate family member: This could involve bereavement or visiting a seriously ill relative.

- Significant family trauma or crisis: These events should be substantial and have a clear impact on the child's ability to attend school.
- Attendance at a funeral of a close relative: This is generally considered an exceptional circumstance.
- Unique and unrepeatable family events: These could include things like a parent's own wedding or important religious observances.

In these instances, we would authorise one day for the 'event' but we would not authorise any extra days that may be needed for travel to and from the 'event'.

It's important to note that holidays during term time, even if travel costs are a factor, are generally not considered exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will assess each request on a case-by-case basis.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and where possible, in advance, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form accessible from the school secretary in the office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (Code C1)
- Attending a medical or dental appointment (Code M)
- Attending an interview for admission to another educational institution (Code J1)
- Studying for a public examination (Code S)
- Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school (Code X)
- Compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable (Code C2)
- Exceptional circumstances (*see definition above*) (Code C)
- Parent travelling for occupational purposes – The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place (Code T)
- 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 (Code R)
- Illness (Code I)

Procedures following unexplained absence

First Day Contact

If a child is absent from school and we have not heard from the parents then as a school we would then follow the procedure below:

- Start first day by calling the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts
- Call the contact list at least twice if we have had no answer
- Make a prompt home visit if we have still have had no answer
- If there is no answer at home then we would immediately contact First Response (which may include children's services / MASH / Police)

Once we have contacted the parent then we would:

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will contact First Response (which may include children's services / MASH / Police).

Strategies for promoting attendance

At Iver Village Junior School we feel it is important to reward children who have achieved good or improved attendance. The weekly 'Attendance Challenge' allows classes to celebrate their collective attendance successes. When a class wins the 'Attendance Challenge' for the week they will receive biscuits in our 'Celebration Assembly'.

Furthermore, we have a 'Movie Token' 96% Attendance Challenge which allows classes to celebrate their collective successes. Any class which achieves a weekly attendance of 96% or above will receive a 'Movie Token'- if they collect 6 tokens then they will receive a Movie Afternoon Treat.

However, we also acknowledge how important it was to celebrate individual success so we introduced the 'Wheel of Fortune' - Any child with 100% attendance for that week will enter the 'Wheel of Fortune' prize draw! The individual winner will be drawn live in our 'Celebration Assembly' with a chance to win a book!

Finally, we initiate 'Spot 100% Challenges' when we identify that attendance needs a boost / push. Any class that achieves 100% during that spot challenge week will receive an automatic Movie Afternoon Treat – without having to collect the tokens.

Iver Village Junior School will always challenge falling attendance and reward improvements. We are committed to the future of all children that attend Iver Village Junior School, and by working in partnership with the school community we believe that together we can achieve more!

Attendance is spoken about daily and the focus never drops from our unswerving aim to ensure that every child attends school every single day.

We can only achieve this by working in partnership with you, if you have any concerns or anything that prevents your child from attending Iver Village Junior School please contact Mr Paul Clifford – Deputy Headteacher & Senior Attendance Champion.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels phone calls, texts, letters, parent consultations and reports.
- Monitor attendance and absence data daily across the school and at an individual pupil level – email is prepared by the School Secretary detailing every absence and late accompanied by a reason and their current % year to date. This is sent to every member of SLT by 9:30 each morning.
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

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.

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Provide regular attendance reports to SLT, headteacher, SENDCo, governors and class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies – demonstrate impact

Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Contact parents by phone or text and hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Buckinghamshire Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Request for Penalty Notice (BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL)

In line with the Buckinghamshire Council/National Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, the school may request a Penalty Notice to be issued if:

- A pupil has 10 or more sessions (equivalent to 5 full school days) of unauthorised absence marks in a term;
- Parents/carers have been formally warned in writing that continued absence/lateness may lead to a Penalty Notice;
- There has been no significant improvement following the school's intervention strategies.
- If the criteria are met, the school submits a formal request to Buckinghamshire Council for the issue of a Penalty Notice. Each parent may be liable for a separate fine per child.

Legal sanctions

The school must consider requesting Buckinghamshire Council issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age and the national threshold has been met. Fixed penalty notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct [Code of conduct for issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period (the second one being payable at £160 with no option to reduce fine by making payment earlier). If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

All natural parents, whether they are married or not

Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil

Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child

Links to other policies and monitoring arrangements

Special Educational Needs And Disability 2025-26

Safeguarding And Child Protection Policy 2025-26 [SEPTEMBER]

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every year by the School Attendance Champion – Mr Paul Clifford. At every review the policy will be approved by the full governing body.