

Attendance Policy



Signed by Chair of Governors	A Grayson
Signed Headteacher	
Date	September 2026
Review Date	September 2027

This Attendance Policy is published on the school's website. It is applied consistently and fairly but also in a way that considers individual needs and it is regularly reviewed and updated.

This Attendance Policy sets out the following:

- Why good attendance at school is so important and whose responsibility it is
- The attendance and punctuality expectations of pupils and parents, including the start and close of the day, register closing times and the processes for requesting leaves of absence and informing the school of the reason for an unexpected absence.
- The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Information and contact details of the school staff who parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis and who they should contact for more detailed support on attendance.
- The school's day to day processes for managing attendance, for example 'first response' calls and processes to follow up on unexplained absence.
- How the school is promoting and incentivising good attendance.
- The school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the local authority.
- The point at which Fixed Penalty Notices for absence and other sanctions will be sought if support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with.

Why Good School Attendance Matters and Why It Is Everyone's Business

Children who have good attendance at school are more likely to grow into happy and healthy adults. They are more likely to gain good qualifications and are more likely to live fulfilling lives as a result. Even missing 10 days of school in an academic year has a noticeable impact (see below).

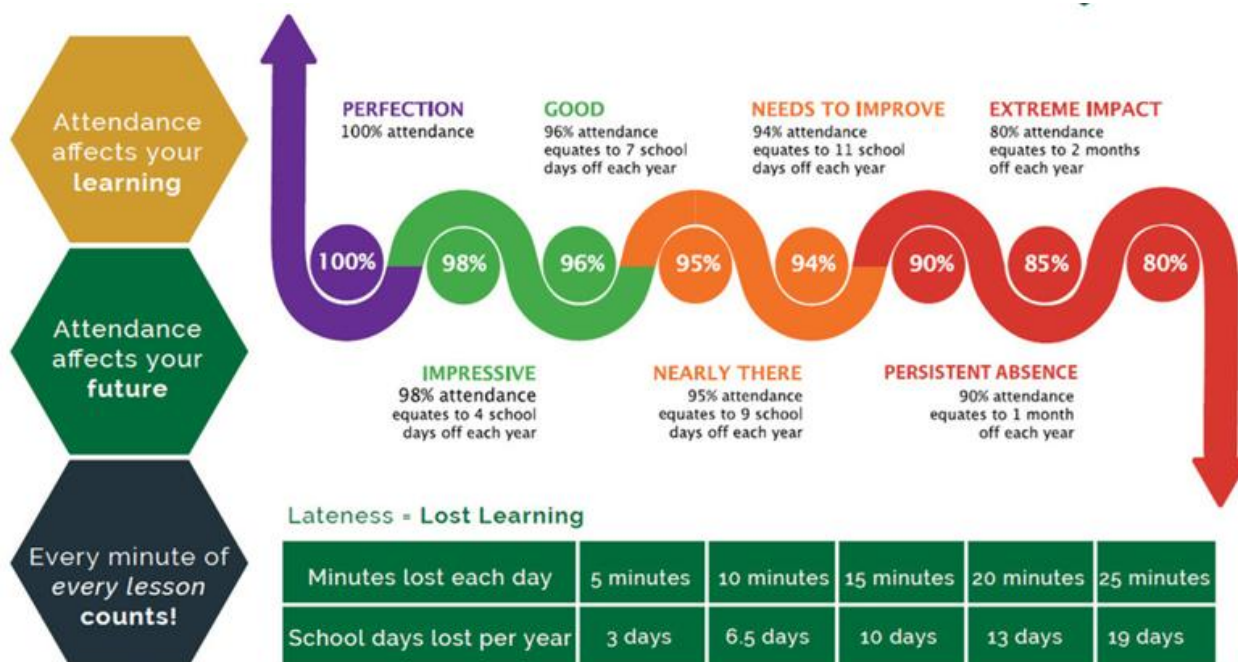
Poor attendance disrupts a child's education. It causes a lack of continuity and progression in schoolwork and can establish patterns of behaviour which may lead to long-term school avoidance.

We also know that children who are vulnerable are protected by attending school, where they can feel safe and play with their friends. We want to look after everyone in our community and make sure they can flourish. This is why we take attendance so seriously.

Punctuality is also a habit that is learnt and an essential life skill. We all know that so many things in life revolve around being in the right place on time which is why we have clear cut off times for lateness to school.

We are preparing children for adult life and are teaching them life-long habits to support them.

The attendance target for every child at Latchford St James Primary School is 97% and above.



Our Basic Expectations

Please refer to our Attendance Register Coding System (Appendix 1).

Start of the school day

Our school day starts at 8:50am and children and parents/carers are welcome on site from 8:30am when the gates open. The registration period begins as soon as children enter the classroom at 8:50am and the register remains open until 9:00am. School staff will always be ready to receive children from 8:50am. In return, we expect parents/carers to make sure their children are on site ready to join registration at 8:50am.

Lateness

Our morning registration period lasts 10 minutes from 8:50am to 9:00am. If a child is not marked present in the classroom by 9:00am they will be marked as late (L). Children arriving at school after 9:00am (when all the gates are locked) must enter school through the main school entrance where a member of the office staff will record their arrival. Children arriving after 9:30am will be marked as severely late (U). If late arrival to school in the mornings becomes persistent or if a noticeable pattern arises, this will be deemed a cause for concern and parents/carers will receive a 'Late Arrival At School Warning Letter' (Appendix 2) and/or be invited in to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

End of the school day

Our school day finishes at 3:20pm (gates open from 3:10pm). Parents/carers are expected to collect children promptly at 3:20pm. In the event of parent/carers running late due to unavoidable circumstances, staff will remain on the exit doors until 3:30pm. At 3:30pm, uncollected children will be sent to our wraparound provision. Persistent late collection (which is deemed avoidable) may result in children being put into our wraparound provision and parents/carers being charged for a full after-school session.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Wherever possible, please make medical/dental appointments after the school day or during holiday periods.

When appointments fall during the school day and cannot be rearranged, please follow the procedures set out below for notifying the school. Please specify the exact time of the appointment and when/if your child is to be collected and then returned to school.

Medical/dental appointments will be recorded as an absence on a child's attendance register (M) when they result in a registration period being missed. We therefore encourage parents to arrange appointments outside of registration periods.

Notifying Us About Absence from School

If your child is unexpectedly unable to attend school (for example illness/sickness), please ring the school office 01925 215640 as early as possible in the morning. Recorded messages can be left before 8:00am and calls will be answered in person by a member of the office staff after 8:00am.

Parents/carers are expected to **notify the school every day** their child is absent, irrespective of whether they were ill the day before or the school itself sent the child home. Regular/daily communication and updates about a child's absence are expected and nothing will be assumed by the school.

N.B. Children who have been physically sick or have diarrhoea are not allowed to return to school until 48 hours has passed since the last bout.

If, for any reason, parents/carers are unable to leave a voice message about an absence, please then notify us via email as a last resort: Latchford_primary@sch.warrington.gov.uk

Office staff will check the submitted registers using our online registration system (SIMS) to ensure each absent pupil is accounted for.

In the event that we have not been notified about an absence, the office staff will undertake a 'first response' safeguarding phone call to determine the child's whereabouts and safety. This will be to the first named contact for the child initially but will continue through all named contacts in order until we gain a satisfactory response that the child is safe and well. This phone call will take place no later than 9:30am.

If a child's whereabouts and safety still cannot be determined after all of the above has taken place, the Headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead may undertake a home visit.

Requesting a Leave of Absence, Holidays in Term Time & Fixed Penalty Notices

Leave of absence requests (e.g. family holiday; sporting activity; music exam) must be made directly to the Headteacher via email: Latchford_primary@sch.warrington.gov.uk

The Headteacher will respond personally to this request by email, detailing the outcome of the request and the related coding on the child's attendance register. The Headteacher will copy relevant office staff and teaching staff members into this email where appropriate.

All term-time holiday requests will be unauthorised (G) except in truly exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers will be issued with a 'Holidays in term time - WBC Attendance Service' letter (Appendix 3) as an attachment to the email response. Parents/carers may also be issued with a 'Fixed Penalty Notice Letter' (Appendix 4) if it is deemed appropriate at that point to remind them that 10 sessions (5 days) or more of absence due to holiday in any 12-month rolling period may result in WBC issuing them with a fixed penalty notice.

The current penalty is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. This amount increases to £160 per parent per child if payment is made between 22 and 28 days.

Please note that there is no right of appeal for this notice. Failure to pay within the specified time may result in the matter being referred to the Magistrates Court, where higher fines could be imposed, and you could receive a criminal record.

For a second offence within a three-year period, the penalty will automatically be £160, with no option for a reduced rate. After two fines within three years, any further unauthorised absences may be referred directly to the court for prosecution and no further penalty notices will be issued.

Staff Responsible for Attendance

Attendance at school, and the associated certainty over a child's welfare and safety, is everyone's responsibility in school so we therefore ensure very efficient, robust communication between all relevant parties takes place at all times.

The Senior Leader directly responsible for attendance is the Headteacher, Mr A. Hayes.

Latchford_primary_head@sch.warrington.gov.uk

Our Office manager P. Singleton – Latchford_primary@sch.warrington.gov.uk is responsible for the daily recording, reporting and monitoring of absence from school and she also supports Mr Hayes with the strategic management of attendance as a whole.

The Deputy Headteacher, class teachers, the Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead and other senior leaders in school may also become directly or indirectly involved in managing attendance and supporting pupils and families.

The appointed Warrington Borough Council Attendance Officer for our school is Mrs R. Keeling
rkeeling@warrington.gov.uk

What We Do To Keep Attendance High

All staff at school are totally committed to ensuring children attend school regularly and that every child meets or exceeds their personal attendance target of 97%. The following procedures and routines help us to ensure attendance remains high:

- Celebrating, recognising and rewarding good attendance (see below)
- All pupil absences are expected to be reported by parents/carers to school as described above
- Leave of absence requests must be made directly to the Headteacher
- 'First response' safeguarding phone calls where any absence is unaccounted for

- Home visits by Headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead where absence from school continues to be unaccounted for or becomes a concern
- Stringent internal recording and reporting systems ensure all relevant staff are aware of absences
- Daily, weekly and half-termly monitoring and analysis of attendance data to identify any concerns (see below)
- Strategic management of attendance by the Headteacher which may lead to appropriate intervention: phone calls, messages, emails, attendance letters, review meetings
- Half termly meetings between the Headteacher/Office Manager and the WBC Attendance Officer to analyse attendance of all pupils and specific cohorts of pupils; identify trends in absence and any concerns; determine which families may require intervention and support

Celebrating, Recognising and Rewarding Good Attendance

Celebration and recognition of good attendance at an individual, group, or whole-school level is an integral part of policy and practice at Latchford St James Primary School. The following initiatives help to promote and celebrate good attendance:

- The weekly newsletter displays whole-school weekly attendance, the highest attending class(es) each week and the cumulative academic year attendance to date
- Weekly newsletter articles may recognise significant achievements in attendance as well as notify parents of any important messages/concerns regarding attendance
- Attendance Trophy – this is awarded to the highest attending class each week in Friday's Celebration Assembly – children in that class are also given 10 minutes additional playtime as a reward
- 100% class attendance in any given week is rewarded with a popcorn party.
- 100% Attendance Awards and prizes are presented to children with 100% attendance for the academic year in a special end of year Attendance Assembly
- 100% Lifetime Attendance Award and prize is presented to any Y6 child who has never had a day off school in the entirety of their school career in the Y6 Leavers' Celebration event
- Headteacher awards and rewards may be given to a class, year group or the whole school for particularly impressive attendance as/when deemed appropriate e.g. whole school attendance in Autumn Term being above 95%.

How We Use Attendance Data to Improve Attendance

When a child's attendance drops below 95%, we begin to monitor their attendance more closely as this will become a cause for concern if it does not show signs of improvement over the next few weeks/months.

When a child's attendance drops below 90% this is classed as Persistently Absent (P.A.) and is deemed to be an immediate cause for concern.

The following procedures are intended to help facilitate a sustained improvement in attendance for pupils which the above applies to:

- Half-termly attendance letters notifying parents/carers that their child's attendance is currently between 90-95% (Amber Attendance Information Letter) (Appendix 5) or below 90% (Red Attendance Warning Letter) (Appendix 6)
- Request to provide medical evidence for ongoing or subsequent illnesses (Appendix 7)
- Invitation to an informal meeting with the Headteacher to discuss attendance concerns and any appropriate support required

- Invitation to a more formal meeting with the Headteacher and WBC Attendance Officer to discuss attendance concerns, any appropriate support required and prevent the need to escalate to a 'fast-track to prosecution' process*
- 'Fast-track to prosecution' process* instigated with mandatory monthly review meetings to bring about an immediate improvement in attendance

*Warrington Borough Council operates a 'Fast-Track' prosecution process, to ensure better management of poor school attendance. The 'Fast-Track' process involves the school, parents and the Attendance Team setting time limited targets for the improvement of individual pupils' attendance. If agreed targets are not met within a 9-week time frame, the Local Authority may take legal action through the Magistrates Court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Those found guilty of this offence may be fined up to £1,000."

Please note that the school and local authority wish to avoid the 'fast-track to prosecution' process wherever/whenever possible and will always consider any uncharacteristic absences and historic attendance when deciding upon an appropriate course of action.

Parents/carers are expected to fully engage with the above processes and support the school towards a common goal of improving their child's attendance.

Appendix 1

The table below shows all attendance and absence codes available to schools as of September 2024. All schools are required to mark every child's register twice a day using the appropriate code.

New codes have been introduced for September 2024, most notably the updated C1 and C2 codes, codes Y1 to Y7 and the K code.

✓ = Yes ✗ = No – = Not applicable (codes that do not count towards a child's attendance)

Code	Definition	Present	Authorised
/	Present (morning session)	✓	✓
\	Present (afternoon session)	✓	✓
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	✓	✓
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	✗	✓
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	✗	✓
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	✗	✓
D	Dual registered at another school	–	–
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	✗	✓
G	Holiday not granted by the school	✗	✗
I	Illness	✗	✓
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	✗	✓
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	✓	✓
L	Late arrival before the register is closed	✓	✓
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment	✗	✓
N	Reason for absence not yet established	✗	✗
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	✗	✗
P	Participating in a sporting activity	✓	✓
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	–	–
R	Religious Observance	✗	✓
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	✗	✓

Code	Definition	Present	Authorised
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	✗	✓
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	✗	✗
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	✓	✓
W	Attending work experience	✓	✓
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	–	–
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	–	–
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	–	–
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	–	–
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	–	–
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	–	–
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	–	–
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	–	–
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	–	–
#	Planned whole school closure (e.g. school holidays, INSET days)	–	–

Deleted Codes

From September 2024 the following codes are no longer available and must not be used:

- H code – all authorised term-time must now be coded with the C code
- J code – replaced by J1
- Y code – replaced by Y1 to Y7

Use of the B Code

The Department for Education has clarified that the B code can only be used when a pupil is taking part in an approved educational activity and that they are physically supervised by an adult considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training and knowledge. It cannot be used for remote learning, even if supervised by a parent.

Use of the Q Code

The Q code can only be used when a child is unable to attend because the local authority is responsible for arranging school transport and this has not yet been set up. Where local authority transport has been set up but fails (e.g. a taxi does not arrive or the bus breaks down), the Y1 code must be used.

Appendix 2

LATE ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL WARNING LETTER

Dear Parent/Carer,

It has come to our attention that your child is repeatedly arriving late to school in the mornings. This is a cause for concern because missing morning routines, introductory learning tasks and important teaching input at the beginning of the day can be very unsettling for a child.

Ultimately, consistently arriving late to school will have a negative impact on your child's academic and personal progress and development (see below).

The timings for the start of the school day at Latchford St James are listed below and it is absolutely crucial that these are strictly adhered to every single day.

Arrival time (Gates open): 8:30am

Doors open: 8:50am

Registration: 9:00am

*Children are marked late after 9:00am so please ensure that your child arrives well in advance of this time.

Please support the school fully by ensuring your child's punctuality improves. A commitment to arrive on time every day shows that your child is fully respecting their education and following our Christian values.

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind regards,

Mr Hayes

Headteacher

Appendix 3

Dear Parent/Carer,

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: HOLIDAY DURING TERM TIME

It is a government priority to improve school attendance and ensure schools tackle all forms of absences. Warrington Borough Council takes attendance matters very seriously because there is clear evidence that any absence from school can and does impact on children's attainment.

The second most common reason for absence from school is family holiday. Whilst the pandemic has meant that many families have been unable to go on holiday over the last 2 years, we must stress that any holiday planned in term time will not be authorised by your children's school. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Schools rightly have to prioritise attendance during term time.

There is now an expectation that all schools introduce stringent checks to ensure that there is a significant reduction in the number of absences during term time. When your child drops below the minimum requirement for school attendance of 90% then they will be classified as a 'persistent absentee' and you may be liable for prosecution.

Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to warn you that any further unauthorised holidays or absences during term time which result in your child becoming a persistent absentee may result in action being taken by the Attendance Team at Warrington Borough Council.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Keeling
Attendance Team
Warrington Borough Council
East Annexe, Town Hall, Sankey Street, Warrington, WA1 1UH
Tel 01925 444269
Email rkeeling@warrington.gov.uk

Appendix 4

Dear Parents/Carers

Fixed Penalty Notice update

I am writing to inform you of the fixed penalty notice procedures for this academic year.

In line with national expectations and Warrington Borough Council's policy, schools are required to monitor attendance closely and take action where there are unauthorised absences.

Where a child has 10 or more unauthorised absences (equivalent to 5 full school days) in an academic year, this may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued. Schools are advised **not** to authorise holidays in term time and parents should be aware that this may result in a FPN being issued if the above criteria are met.

Your child's school will monitor attendance, and where appropriate they will refer cases to Warrington Borough Council for consideration of a FPN. The local authority will review each referral and determine whether a FPN should be issued.

Fixed Penalty Notice Charges

The current penalty is £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. This amount increases to £160 per parent per child if payment is made between 22 and 28 days.

Please note that there is no right of appeal for this notice. Failure to pay within the specified time may result in the matter being referred to the Magistrates Court, where higher fines could be imposed, and you could receive a criminal record.

For a second offence within a three-year period, the penalty will automatically be £160, with no option for a reduced rate. After two fines within three years, any further unauthorised absences may be referred directly to the court for prosecution and no further penalty notices will be issued.

For any further information please use the attached link which gives up to date guidance on school attendance - [Working together to Improve School Attendance](#)

Yours sincerely,



Debbie Parlane
Education Welfare Manager
Email: dparlane@warrington.gov.uk

Appendix 5

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION LETTER

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance for the academic year to date is currently between 90% and 95%. If their attendance falls below 90%, this would be a cause for concern as they would then be classed as persistently absent (P.A.) and subject to strict monitoring and intervention by the school and the Attendance Team at Warrington Borough Council.

The attendance target for every pupil at Latchford St James CofE Primary School is 97% so your child is currently some way short of their target.

Whilst we recognise that genuine illnesses are unavoidable and that there are probably very justifiable reasons for your child's absences, we still have a professional duty to ensure this improves as attendance below 95% can undoubtedly have a negative impact on a child's academic and personal progress and development (see below).

Holidays taken in term-time are not allowed and will always be coded as unauthorised unless there are truly exceptional circumstances.

Please support your child to ensure their attendance improves over the next few weeks/months.

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind regards,

Mr Hayes

Headteacher

ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you that your child's attendance for the academic year to date is currently below 90%. This is a cause for concern and means that your child is classed as persistently absent (P.A.).

The **attendance target** for every pupil at Latchford St James is **97%** so your child is currently a long way short of their target.

The school and Attendance Team at Warrington Borough Council are now carefully monitoring your child's attendance and may invite you to an Attendance Review Meeting to discuss this matter in person. If there is not a significant improvement over the next few weeks/months, you may be asked to provide medical evidence for any subsequent absences and, in severe cases, may be fast-tracked for prosecution.

Whilst we recognise that genuine illnesses are unavoidable and that there are probably very justifiable reasons for your child's absences, we still have a professional duty to ensure this improves as your child's low attendance is undoubtedly having a negative impact on their academic and personal progress and development (see below).

Holidays taken in term-time are not allowed and will always be coded as unauthorised unless there are truly exceptional circumstances.

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind regards,

Mr Hayes
Headteacher

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CONCERN – MEDICAL EVIDENCE

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you that due to your child's current, concerning attendance, you are now requested to provide medical evidence to support the reasons if you decide in future that your child is too ill to attend school.

This evidence may take the form of either a letter from your GP, an appointment card (date stamped and signed by staff at your GP's surgery) or appointment confirmation phone screenshot as proof that your child has attended for treatment. It may also include a copy of a prescription or medication that has the child's name and date on it.

This decision has not been taken lightly and has been made following advice given from the Local Authority Attendance Service. If your child is now absent from school and medical evidence has not been provided their absence will be coded as unauthorised (O); an accumulation of unauthorised attendance could then lead to more serious action being taken against you.

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind regards,

Mr Hayes
Headteacher