



LEEDS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

YEADON WESTFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2024-25/ 2025-26

This policy is the intellectual property of Leeds City Council. Should any organisations outside of the Leeds Local Authority incorporate large sections of this policy without alteration please make acknowledgement of this.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We believe that every person has a fair and equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, ability or cultural or religious background, sexuality or disability. We embrace all aspects of global citizenship and community cohesion, promoting British Values throughout all aspects of school life, actively tackling prejudice or extreme views.

Yeadon Westfield Junior School is required to keep and process certain information about its staff members and pupils in accordance with its legal obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The school may, from time to time, be required to share personal information about its staff or pupils with other organisations, mainly the LA, other schools and educational bodies, and potentially children's services. This policy is written in line with our agreed policy for GDPR.



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This Attendance Policy is available on the school website and is reviewed and ratified annually by the governing body/board of trustees or as events or legislation requires. Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified will be remedied without delay.

Academic year	Headteacher	Senior Attendance Champion (SLT)	Nominated Governor Attendance	Chair of Governors
2024-25 2025-26	Lisa Piotrowicz	Lisa Piotrowicz	Helen Jones	Rachel Gregson-Khan

Policy Review date	Date Ratified by governors	Date Shared with staff
July 2026	16 th October 2024	2 nd September 2024

School Name	Yeadon Westfield Junior School
Attendance Target	97%
School opens at	8.55am
Registers close at	9.30am

Attendance Policy

1. Contact List

Role / Agency	Name and role	Contact Details
Headteacher	Lisa Piotrowicz	l.piotrowicz@yeadonwestfieldjuniorschool.co.uk
Senior Attendance Champion SLT	Lisa Piotrowicz	l.piotrowicz@yeadonwestfieldjuniorschool.co.uk
Attendance Champion	Rosie Stokey	r.stokey@yeadonwestfieldjuniorschool.co.uk
Governor with responsibility for Attendance	Helen Jones	h.jones@yeadonwestfieldjuniorschool.co.uk
Chair Of Governors	Rachel Gregson-Khan	r.gregson-khan@yeadonwestfieldjuniorschool.co.uk
School Office	Yasmin Breeze Debra Thornton	office@yeadonwestfieldjuniorschool.co.uk
Learning Mentor	Rosie Stokey	r.stokey@yeadonwestfieldjuniorschool.co.uk
School Attendance Service (SAS)	Queries relating to attendance	0113 3785994 Schoolattendanceservice@leeds.gov.uk
Elective Home Education (EHE)	Queries around Elective Home Education	EHE@leeds.gov.uk
Children Missing Education (CME)	Referrals for children missing education	0113 378 9686 CME@leeds.gov.uk
Education Safeguarding Team	Advice / Training / Safeguarding Audit	0113 3789685 estconsultation@leeds.gov.uk

Attendance Policy

2. Policy Statement

Yeadon Westfield Junior School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to reach their full potential. There is a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups.

Yeadon Westfield Junior School aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure that every child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, we ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance for all students at Yeadon Westfield Junior School.

We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parents and carers.

This attendance policy is part of broader suite of safeguarding policies and should not be viewed in isolation. Safeguarding policies include the Child Protection Policy, Anti-bullying policy and behaviour policy.

3. Aims

3.1 The school aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff are aware of their responsibilities with respect to Attendance and understand the correlation with safeguarding.
- Parents, carers, and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year are recognised and rewarded.

3.2 The responsibilities set out in this policy apply (as appropriate) to all members of the school community including pupils, parents, staff, and governors. It is fully incorporated into the whole school ethos and culture.

4. Legislation and guidance

4.1 This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance,

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)
([publishing.service.gov.uk](#))

4.2 The Education Act 1996 states that:

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who are absent for more than ten days without explanation.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

[Education Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) - Part 6

[Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) - Part 3

5 Partnership Expectations

What the school expects of our pupils
That pupils attend regularly on time and ready to learn
Pupils are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment
Pupils who arrive after registration time report to the office
Pupils tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school
What the school expects of parents/carers
Ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time to fulfil their legal responsibility
Notify school on the first day of absence and provide reason for absence
Complete a request form for absence in term time for exceptional circumstances
Supply medical evidence when required
Ensure all parental and child contact details are up to date
Provide school with two emergency contact details
Speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child/ren from attending
What the parents/carers can expect from the school
A broad, balanced education with a curriculum that engages and inspires
Encouragement and rewards for good attendance and punctuality at school

Prompt action when a problem has been identified
Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
Contact with parents and carers on the first day when absence is unexplained
Liaison with officers from the Local Authority from a variety of teams to assist and support families where needed
Regular communication with parents and carers
A warm, welcoming environment where students feel safe at all times

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Head Teacher and Governing Body

The Head Teacher will provide a strategic lead throughout the school by line managing key members of staff, ensuring the effective deployment of resources, ensuring compliance with the policy outlined and preparing cases that are being prepared for formal prosecution. The Learning Mentor will be responsible for initial data analysis, reporting to the Head Teacher who will support any actions required and report to the Governors.

The Head is responsible for:

- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for safeguarding and how this links with poor school attendance - ensuring compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2023)
- Developing good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and special educational needs (SEND). Ensuring compliance with Statutory Guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England December 2015 - Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions)
- Ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Ensuring staff are actively working to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and whole school attendance.
- Having clear processes in place to address persistent and severe absence - pupils who are severely absent may be at risk of CCE/CSE/grooming etc. and this cohort must be made the top priority for action and support. Ensuring all staff are aware of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, Children's Social Work Services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Often severely absent pupils have additional needs and therefore it is vital that schools ensure all appropriate services are informed and aware of the pupil's absence so suitable support can be considered, and education provided/accessed.

- Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Monitoring and analysing data and trends.
- Reporting to the Governing Body and Trusts the attendance figures and progress to achieving the set targets.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Open and honest communication with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Sharing information on and working collaboratively with other schools in the area/cluster, LAs, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming severe or persistent.

Ensuring the school attendance policy is applied fairly and consistently and recognises the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Governing Body

The governing body will set policy and monitor attendance and punctuality. The designated governor for attendance and punctuality will support the Head Teacher and Attendance Team to ensure that procedures are followed and parents/carers are clear about their responsibilities. Attendance data will be presented in the Head Teacher's report.

6.2 The School Senior Attendance Champion SLT

The School Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy with the Attendance Champion.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Championing and improving attendance.
- Ensuring the practice that is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Oversight of data analysis -
 - Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes, raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.

- Robust school systems are in place which provide useful data at cohort, group, and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
 - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
 - young carers
 - children who are eligible for free school meals
 - children who speak English as a second language
 - children who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Keeping all school staff informed of attendance figures and trends by providing regular reports to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.
- Compiling attendance data for the Governing Body and the Local Authority.
- Ensuring a positive working relationship with the School Attendance Service is fostered, including attending Attendance Targeted Support Meetings.
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents.
- If required, holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Undertaking home visits in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- Making sure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.

6.3 Teaching staff

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensuring that the registers are taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session and are accurate and up to-date.
- Reviewing class and individual attendance patterns.
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns.
- Emphasizing with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families, and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils, and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.

- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or who are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Liaising with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, for example, where a young person has a social worker or is otherwise vulnerable.
- Modeling respectful relationships and appropriate communication for staff and pupils. This will help relationships between pupils and staff to reflect a positive and respectful culture. All staff members should:
 - treat pupils with dignity
 - build relationships rooted in mutual respect and observe proper boundaries
 - take into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this might contribute to absence
 - handle confidential information sensitively
 - understand the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and pupils, particularly for children with a social worker and those who have experienced adversity
 - communicate effectively with families regarding pupils' attendance and well-being
- Rehearse and reinforce attendance and punctuality expectations continually.
- Emphasize the importance of attendance and its impact on attainment.
- Promote the next lesson and the sequence of the lesson to motivate pupils to be in the classroom.
- Promote rewards and celebrate progress but continue to outline sanctions.
- Apply rewards and sanctions consistently.
- Follow up on absence and lateness with pupils to identify barriers and reasons for absence.
- Contact parents and carers regarding absence and punctuality.
- Review form or tutor group attendance weekly to share data, identify issues, intervene early, and help set targets.
- Periodically review practice and consistency both across and between departments.
- Proactively promote attendance practice as part of staff induction.
- Consider the individual needs and vulnerabilities of pupils.

6.4 Attendance and pastoral staff

Attendance and pastoral staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate.
- Ensuring robust day-to-day processes are in place.
- Tracking and following up absence and poor punctuality (implement punctuality routines such as late gate or sign in procedures).
- Providing appropriate support and challenge to establish good registration practice.

- Carrying out robust first day calling procedures including priority routines for vulnerable children including children with a social worker. If absence continues without explanation, further contact should be made to ensure safeguarding.
- Identifying any absences that are not explained for each session and contacting parents to understand why, and when the pupil will return to school.
- Where absences are recorded as unexplained in the attendance inputting the correct code as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no later than 5 school days after the session.
- Keeping parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format and percentage headlines should be avoided. For example, concentrate on the amount of time missed and the impact on the pupil's learning).
- Holding regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or Local Authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Identifying pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and making the necessary referrals.
- Undertaking home visits in line with safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Identifying and, where possible, mitigating potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies.
- Implementing children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate.
- Where pupils have additional vulnerabilities, which may require multi-agency meetings trying to arrange those meetings outside of lesson time, where possible.

For pupils at risk of persistent absence

- Providing regular attendance reports.
- Initiating and overseeing the administration of absence procedures.
This should include:
 - letters home
 - attendance meetings.
 - engagement with local authorities and other external agencies and partners
 - working with families and the community to identify which methods of communication work best, recognising potential barriers in hard-to-reach families and finding methods that work and are understood
 - consideration as to whether further interventions are required in line with the statutory guidance on parental responsibility measures
 - providing regular reports to leaders on the at-risk cohort
 - providing regular reports/caseloads to local authority attendance team or independent attendance organisations to raise awareness of emerging at-risk pupils

For pupils who are persistently absent

- Developing and implementing persistent absence action plans with pupils and families which address barriers and help establish positive attendance routines.
- Identifying tailored intervention which meets the needs of the pupil.
- Leading daily or weekly check-ins to review progress and impact of support, make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Liaising with school leaders (designated safeguarding, SENDco and pastoral leads) on referrals to external agencies and multi-agency assessments.
- Coordinating and contributing to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions.
- Working in partnership with School Attendance Service and other agencies to ensure the appropriate use of statutory parental responsibility measures.
- Providing regular reports to leaders on the impact of action plans and interventions.

7 Attendance procedures

7.1 Registration

Registration takes place each morning at 8.55 am and each afternoon at 1.05 pm.

- Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) on the register for each pupil present and an absent mark for any pupil that is absent.

7.2 Responding to lateness

- Pupils arriving in the classroom after 8.55am when the register has been taken are deemed to be late and will be marked as L code.
- After 9.30am and 1.40pm the pupil is deemed to be Late/absent. Any pupil arriving in school after these times will be marked U. In case of emergency the register shows the pupil is on the premises, but they will not receive a present mark toward their overall attendance.
- Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late.

7.3 Responding to absence

- Repeated absences will lead to detailed monitoring by the school attendance staff.
- Targets for improvement will be clear and communicated to pupil and parent or carer.
- School will organise support to remove barriers to regular attendance.
- School will organise meetings with parents or carers to review and improve attendance.
- If attendance does not improve, school will refer to the local authority for legal action.

7.4 Working with the Local Authorities School Attendance Service

- School works in partnership with the statutory School Attendance Service to devise a strategic approach to attendance through Register Checks and Targeted Support Meetings.
- The Head Teacher/Senior Attendance Champion (SLT) and the Attendance school staff will meet with an Attendance Improvement Officer from the School Attendance Service when required, to discuss and improve attendance for persistently absent or severely absent pupils.
- Action plans will be developed for persistently and severely absent pupils.
- If parents/carers do not proactively engage with support offered through the action plan, then formal legal intervention may be requested from the School Attendance Service.

Statutory intervention can include

- Penalty Notices
- Parenting Order
- Education Supervision Order
- Prosecution

8 Authorised and unauthorised absence

8.1 Authorised absence

Authorised absence is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (where possible routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement - (Head Teacher's discretion)
- Religious observance (The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong)
- Approved leave in term time where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Head Teacher.
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence

8.2 Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is defined as:

- Being late after the registers have closed - 'U' code
- Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping or having a haircut
- Where no explanation is offered by the parent or carer
- Where the school is not satisfied with an explanation offered
- Special occasions e.g. birthdays/weddings
- Holidays/leave in term time
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment

- Translating for family members
- Visiting sick relatives
- Exceptional term time leave longer than agreed by the Headteacher

9 Children Missing Education (CME)

A child who is absent as well as missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Where a child is reported to be missing education we will comply with our statutory duty to inform the local authority of any pupil who falls within the reporting notification requirements outlined in [Children Missing Education - Statutory guidance for local authorities \(DfE September 2016\)](#) and follow the Leeds Children's Services LA procedure and contact: cme@leeds.gov.uk. Tel: 0113 3789686.

Appendix 1: Yeadon Westfield Junior School Attendance Ethos and Procedures

We believe that there is a clear link between attendance and positive outcomes for children and young people. Research findings and learning from best practice shows that:

- Students must attend regularly to achieve their full potential
- Students who miss out on school can feel vulnerable and left behind
- Leave in term time is disruptive and can seriously affect your child's education.
- Students who consistently miss 17+ days in a school year lose one full grade in their GCSEs
- Unauthorised absence can lead to prosecution.

The following shows the link between % attendance at school and number of days absent:

- 98% = Fewer than 4 days absent in one school year.
- 95% = Fewer than 10 days absent in one school year.
- 90% = 4 weeks (20 days) absent in one school year.
- 85% = 5½ weeks (28 days) absent in one school year.
- 80% = 7½ weeks (38 days) absent in one school year.

Over a period of five school years, students with an average attendance of 85-90% will have missed half a school year of education while students with an average attendance of 80% over the same period will have missed a whole school year.

Our aim is to therefore is to encourage full attendance for all students at Yeadon Westfield Junior School.

We do this by:

- Creating a warm and welcoming environment
- Ensuring that students feel safe at all times
- Developing a strong sense of citizenship within our students
- Offering a curriculum that engages and inspires
- Ensuring high quality teaching at all times
- Encouraging, praising and celebrating achievement and success

Our policy outlines the process by which parents/carers can request leave under exceptional circumstances for their child/ren. In addition, our policy provides clear procedures regarding absence through illness and the school's response to illness and absence. This follows the latest Government legislation and guidelines and is the culmination of detailed consultation with both Leeds City Council. **It has been developed and agreed by the Aireborough Family of Schools to ensure consistency, fairness and clear decision making in relation to school attendance and absence.**

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:-

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health & Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-bullying

Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents/carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

Supporting Attendance

In order to support great attendance, we will record two attendance sessions per day (AM and PM) and report on student attendance at fixed periods throughout the year. During lessons, we will ensure registers are complete and that all children are accounted for as this is a key part of our safeguarding protocols. Great attendance will be acknowledged and celebrated. Pupils who we feel need to improve their attendance will be set targets and supported in identifying barriers to attendance and, wherever possible, removing or overcoming these barriers.

Attendance data will be used to plan for effective strategies, analyse the impact of the school's work and identify priorities and areas for improvement. Data will be used to:

- Monitor individual absence and lateness to school
- Identify patterns and trends in attendance and punctuality

- Identify students who should be celebrated for great attendance or significant improvement

Absence Procedures

If a child is absent the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- Contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence (by 9.30am)
- The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take the call
- Or parents/carers can text, email or call into school and report to reception.

If a child is absent school will:

- Telephone or text parents/carers on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them;
- Invite parents/carers in to discuss the situation with the Head Teacher or Learning Mentor if absences persist;

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information.

Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Lateness impacts learning over time.

Minutes late per day	School days/weeks missed over the school year
5 minutes late	3.4 school days missed over the school year
10 minutes late	1.4 school weeks missed over the school year
15 minutes late	2.6 school weeks missed over the school year
20 minutes late	2.8 school weeks missed over the school year.
30 minutes late	4 school weeks missed over the school year.

How we manage lateness

Preparation for the school day starts at **8.45am when the gates and doors are opened** and we expect our children to be here, ready to come in. The

children are expected to be in the school building with doors closed at **8.55am** which is the official time for register at the start of the school day. **Gates are locked at 9.00am.** Registers are marked at **8.55am** and a child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. Any late arrivals must enter school via the front office and children must be signed in by a parent/carer with the reason for lateness recorded.

At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if a child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence for that session unless evidence can be shown, for example, that there has been an emergency such as a visit to the Doctors.

If a child has a persistent late record parents/carers will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher and/or Learning Mentor to resolve the problem, but parents/carers can approach school at any time if they are having problems getting their child to school on time.

Term Time Absence and Requests for Leave

Parents/Carers do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time without prior permission and agreement by the Head Teacher or those granted that level of authorisation by the Head Teacher. In the event of exceptional circumstances parents may request leave during term time in writing and using an Exceptional Circumstances request form available from the school office. Each application will be considered by the Head Teacher, or the member of Senior Leadership with delegated responsibility, who will decide whether or not the absence is to be authorised and the number of days. **Please note leave will not be considered retrospectively.**

In the event that unauthorised leave is taken, then the school will consider a fixed penalty fine.

Please note, it has been agreed across the Aireborough Trust that we cannot take into consideration the impact of other Local Authority school holidays, continental shift patterns or public service shift patterns when considering holiday and leave requests.

Fixed Penalty Fines

Under the latest Government Legislation parents / carers who take their children out of school during term time, without authorisation, may be issued with a fixed penalty fine by the Local Authority and could face possible prosecution in court.

In Leeds, a penalty notice will be issued for unauthorised absences of ten sessions or more within a ten week period and as an Aireborough Learning Partnership Trust School we are fully committed to this policy.

The penalty notice includes absences for holidays as well as other unauthorised absence. If a penalty notice is issued, it will be for the whole period of absence. So the penalty would be the same for an absence of five days or ten days.

Fines are issued for each parent and each child so, for example, a family of four with two parents and two children will be fined a total of £320 to be paid within 28 days (£160 per parent, per child). This will be reduced to £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days. If a second offence occurs within the first 3 years of the first offence the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for early payment on the second offence. If a third offence occurs within 3 years of the first offence a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will instead be presented immediately to the Magistrates Court, can show as a criminal record and also appear on DBS checks as "failure to safeguard a child's education".

Absences are not included as "unauthorised" provided medical evidence is given to the school after 5 days of self-certification. Penalties are issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period or 5 days of consecutive unauthorised absence.

School Responses to Absence

At Yeadon Westfield Junior School we value great attendance and work in close partnership with parents and carers to ensure every child is accessing their education. As with every school, and in line with DFE guidance, we make a distinction between 'authorised absence' and 'unauthorised absence'. Below are some examples of both, but please be aware this list is not exhaustive.

Leave categorisation	Authorised?	Number of days	Other information?
Death of close family member	Yes	5 + 1	5 days + one day for funeral with additional consideration where required
Death of extended family member	Yes	1 + 1	One day + one day for funeral
Religious Observance	Yes	2	2 days i.e. Eid = one day for each observance. If in doubt, consult with local place of worship
Hospital Appointment	Yes	1	Only authorised with letter from hospital / professional

Medical / Dental Appointment	Yes	0.5	Unauthorised without letter
Sports Representation	Yes*	HT's Discretion	Representation at city, regional and above
Weddings	Yes	1	One day for family
Graduation	Yes	1	One day for immediate family

Our responses to non-attendance are evidence based and intended to be implemented at the point of most impact. Below are the key stages for parents and carers to be aware of:

95% + Attendance is positive and a cause of celebration. Our school target for good attendance is aspirational at 97%.

93% - 95% Attendance is reasonable but could be improved. School will monitor.

90 - 93% Attendance is becoming a concern. A letter outlining the risk of persistent absence will be issued other than in exceptional circumstances.

<90% Attendance will no longer be authorised without a medical note.

75% - 90% In the event that attendance is between 75% and 89.9% or if there are ten missed sessions over a ~~twelve~~ ten week period, the school will undertake a risk assessment and, unless there is absolute satisfaction that the absences were unavoidable, school will undertake the 'FastTrack' initiative in line with DFE guidance. This will then lead to a period of monitoring for twenty days and if there is no immediate improvement, a School Attendance Panel will be convened and a fixed penalty notice warning letter may be issued. Once a fixed penalty notice is issued, any further unauthorised absence could lead to a fixed penalty fine.

<75% Where attendance is below 75% there will be ongoing risk assessment of whether to recommend a 'FastTrack' process or pursue further levels of prosecution. Only cases that have unavoidable circumstances or those that have shown significant improvement over a six week period will avoid recommendations for prosecution.

Although we are aware that there are times absence may be inevitable or unavoidable, we commit to undertaking a thorough risk assessment process for cases under 90% to ensure that our decision making is fair and consistent.



Penalty Notice Charges at Yeadon Westfield Junior School

The Department for Education has recently announced national changes to penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence in term time. These changes will come into effect on 19 August 2024. This is nationwide, and if you move house or school your attendance remains unaffected. Term time leave for exceptional circumstances is very rarely granted and must be done so by the Head Teacher.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days.

This is reduced to £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence

Issued within 3 years of the first offence.

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days.

No reduction for early payment.

Third Offence onwards

Issued within 3 years of first offence.

The third time offence is committed for unauthorised term time leave, or irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will be presented immediately to the Magistrates Court. Fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in the Magistrates Court can show as a criminal record, and also appear on DBS checks run on parents as 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Things to remember:

- Absences for illness are not included as 'unauthorised' providing medical evidence is given to the school after 5 days of self-certification.
- Penalty Notices are issued Per Parent, Per Child. For example, a 3 child household would be issued with 3 fines for each parent (regardless of whether both parents were with the children during the absence).
- Penalties are issued for 10 sessions unauthorised absence in 10 weeks or 5 days consecutive unauthorised absence.