West End Primary School

We work hard together to be excellent in all that we do. We are confident and compassionate, happy and have fun.

LEEDS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

WEST END PRIMARY SCHOOL MODEL ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

Academic Year 2026-2027

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Document Detail	
Policy written by:	Becky Linton
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Next review date by:	June 2027

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	School Attendance Champion (SLT)	Nominated Governor Attendance	Chair of Governors
2026-2027	Rebecca Linton	Becky Linton	Rachel Emmott	Rachel Emmott

Policy Review date	Date Ratified by governors	Date Shared with staff
July 2027		September 2026

School Name	West End Primary School
Attendance Target	96%
School opens at	8.45
Registers close at	9.00

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1. Contact List – June 2026

Role / Agency	Name and role	Contact Details
Headteacher/Principal	Rebecca Linton	head@westendprimary.org.uk 01132582819
Attendance Champion SLT	Rebecca Linton	head@westendprimary.org.uk 01132582819
Attendance Officer	Laura Marshall	westendschool@Westendprimary.org.uk 01132582819
Governor with responsibility for Attendance	Rachel Emmott	r.emmott@westendprimary.org.uk
Chair Of Governors	Rachel Emmott	r.emmott@westendprimary.org.uk
School Office	Laura Marshall	Westendschool@westendprimary.org.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

2. Policy Statement

At West End Primary School, we work hard together to be excellent in all that we do. We believe that regular attendance is fundamental to helping every child reach their full potential and achieve excellence in their learning. When our pupils are confident, compassionate, happy and having fun, they thrive both academically and socially. There is a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress socially and academically, developing the confidence and compassion that are at the heart of our school community. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups, creating the happy, supportive environment where all our children flourish.

West End Primary School is committed to working in partnership with families and other agencies to ensure that every child gets the best from their education and is able to reach their full potential.
We have clear and robust strategies in place for managing and promoting regular attendance for all pupils.

Our attendance policy should be read in conjunction with the following West End policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Relationships and Behaviour Policy

- Anti-bullying Policy

3. Aims

3.1 West End Primary 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 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) following update 19th August 2024

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
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

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 **Headteacher**

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 2024. Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- 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)
- 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, and acting upon this (see Appendix 1)
- 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.

6.2 **The School Attendance Champion SLT** – This is also the headteacher at West End Primary School

The School Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy
- 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 the 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 (see Appendix 2)
- 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.
- 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 to facilitate weekly reviews with leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes.
- Initiating and overseeing the administration of absence procedures.
  This should include:

- letters home
- attendance clinics
- 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

- The doors open for children to arrive at 8.45am and registers close at 9.15am and each afternoon at 1pm
- 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 to school after 9am when the classroom doors are closed, and register has been taken are deemed to be late and will be marked as L code.
- After 9.15am 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 and, in some circumstances, Horsforth children's Services.
- Targets for improvement will be clear and communicated to pupil and parent or carer.
- School will work with Horsforth Children's Services to 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 Headteacher/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. <u>Authorised and unauthorised and absence</u>

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 – (Headteacher'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 Headteacher. (eg, parent return from armed services, adoption day)
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance <u>and</u> 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

For consideration of authorised leave in exceptional circumstances a request form must be completed before the planned absence and submitted to the school for review. These can be found on the school website: Do I need to keep my child off school? | West End Primary School or collected from the school office.

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.

This policy has been written in line with the government changes regarding fining parents who take children out of school (19th August 2024). See DFE wording regarding the penalty process below:

Fine

Your local council can give each parent a fine of £80, rising to £160 if you do not pay within 21 days.

From the 2024 to 2025 school year, each parent will only get up to 2 fines for the same child in a 3-year period.

If you get a second fine in 3 years it will be £160. If you do not pay the fine in 28 days you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school.

If your child is off school 3 or more times within the 3 years you will not be fined but may be taken to court.

> Check your local council's rules on when you can be fined and how to pay a fine.

If you're taken to court

You could get a fine of up to £2,500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court could also give you a Parenting Order.

Appendix 1

Attendance %	Status	Action
96% - 100%	Excellent	Continue to promote good attendance and follow expectations in policy
93% - 95%	Monitoring	Review pupils in this category at biweekly attendance team meetings – discuss aspects such as time of year e.g. start, periods of illness, holiday etc.
90% - 93%	At risk of becoming a persistent absentee	Send letter highlighting attendance status. Combine this with a conversation with parents/carers with either Attendance Officer or Attendance Lead. We may use an Individual Attendance Support Plan at this point to formalise the support offered by school and to ensure this can be communicated with all relevant staff in a consistent way (Appendix 3)
70% - 89%	Persistent Absentee	Use Fast Track process – letters, SAP meeting, attendance support plans, possibly involving outside agencies
69% or lower	Casework	Multi-agency support, intensive intervention/support plan, legal action, possible safeguarding referral

Appendix 2

Attendance - Day to Day Process

8.45am Doors open

EYFS & KS1 teachers greet children at the classroom door

KS2 teachers meet the children on the playground

9am

All electronic registers in classrooms to have been completed. (9.15am -registers close)

Attendance Officer to go through absences adding accurate codes.

1. Check school has been contacted by parents/carers of absentees. Phone any parents/carers of absentees who have not contacted school to find out reason for absence. Ensure all means of contact are used – all contacts for a pupil/email.
2. By 10am – If still no contact made/reason for absence, alert DSL. Next action may be home visit. All actions to be recorded on CPOMS.

Appendix 3

Individual Attendance Support Plan

Name of pupil:

Class/Year Group:

Date and Current Attendance %:

Date IASP to be reviewed:

Overview of barriers identified through conversations with parents/carers, child and associated staff members:	
Supportive measures to put into place	Who is responsible for this?