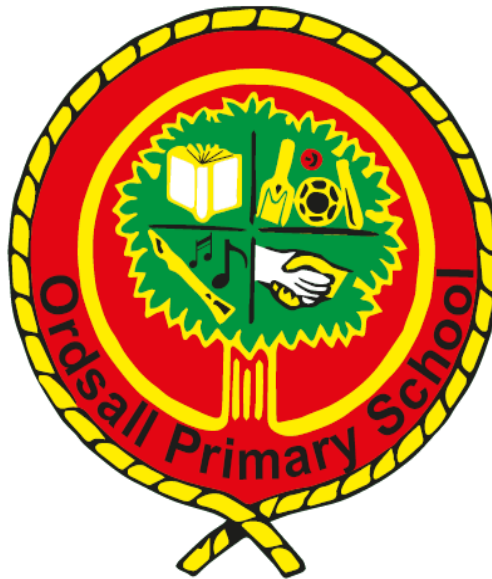




Play, Learn and Grow...Together!

Ordsall Primary School

Attendance and Absence Policy

Date reviewed: September 2026

Reviewed by: Karl Hopkinson (Headteacher)

Approved by: Governing Body

Next review: September 2027

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Statement of intent

At Ordsall Primary School, we believe that regular attendance is essential for children to achieve well, develop positive relationships and benefit fully from the opportunities provided by school.

Our attendance target is 96%.

We recognise that the reasons for absence can be complex and that some children face greater barriers to attendance than others. Our approach is therefore based on high expectations, early identification, support and partnership with families.

We will:

- promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- monitor attendance and absence regularly;
- identify emerging concerns and patterns of absence at an early stage;
- listen to children and families and work with them to understand and address barriers;
- provide appropriate support and make reasonable adjustments where necessary;
- work with the Local Authority and other agencies where additional support is required; and
- use formal intervention where appropriate and where support has not resulted in sufficient improvement.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. The school will work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers to ensure children attend school regularly and punctually.

The school's Attendance and Family Support Lead is Mrs Steph Smith. Parents and carers can contact Mrs Smith through the school office or by emailing office@ordsallpri.notts.sch.uk.

1. Legal framework

This policy has regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Education Act 1996;
- Education Act 2002;
- Equality Act 2010;
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended;
- DfE *Working together to improve school attendance*;
- DfE *Keeping Children Safe in Education*;
- DfE *Children missing education*; and
- DfE guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions and children who cannot attend school because of health needs.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Child Protection, SEND, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions, Behaviour and Children Missing Education policies.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- promote the importance of good attendance;
- ensure school leaders prioritise attendance;
- regularly review attendance data, patterns and trends;
- consider attendance for different groups of pupils, including those who may face additional barriers; and
- provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders.

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the school's strategic approach to attendance and will:

- ensure this policy is implemented consistently;
- promote a whole-school culture of good attendance;
- ensure appropriate systems are in place to monitor and improve attendance;
- ensure statutory attendance responsibilities are fulfilled; and
- decide whether leave of absence should be authorised.

Attendance and Family Support Lead

Our Attendance and Family Support Lead is responsible for the day-to-day monitoring and improvement of attendance. This includes:

- monitoring individual, group and whole-school attendance;
- identifying emerging patterns and concerns;
- contacting and meeting with families;

- understanding barriers to attendance and coordinating appropriate support;
- monitoring the impact of attendance interventions;
- working with school staff, the Local Authority and external agencies; and
- supporting the use of formal attendance procedures where appropriate.

All staff

Staff will:

- promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- accurately complete attendance registers where this forms part of their role;
- be alert to changes or patterns in attendance;
- raise concerns promptly; and
- recognise that absence may be an indicator of a safeguarding or wider welfare concern.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- ensure their child attends school every day that they are required to attend;
- ensure their child arrives at school on time;
- contact school promptly whenever their child is absent;
- provide the reason for absence;
- keep contact details up to date and provide more than one emergency contact wherever possible;
- arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible;
- request leave of absence in advance and only where exceptional circumstances apply; and
- engage with support offered by the school or Local Authority where attendance is a concern.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

Missing education

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

4. Attendance and punctuality

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils. The school's expected level of attendance is 96% as a minimum.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at 8:45am, and there is a 10-minute window that allows for children to be dropped off at different classrooms, meaning all pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons by 8:55am. Any child that arrives at their classroom door after 8:55am will need to enter school via the school office so they can be registered.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by 9am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at 9:30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time
- The afternoon register will be marked by 12:40pm for Phases 1 and 2, and 1:40pm for Phase 3. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by these times
- The afternoon register will close at 1:10pm for Phases 1 and 2, and 2:10pm for Phase 3. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present by these times

Parents and pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the Family Team.

5. Reporting absence

Parents and carers should contact the school before 9:15am on each day of absence, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with the school.

Parents should provide:

- their child's name and class;
- the reason for absence; and
- where known, how long they expect the absence to last.

Absence can be reported to the school office by telephone, Arbor or by emailing office@ordsallpri.notts.sch.uk.

Where a child is absent and the school has not received an explanation, the school will make contact with the family as soon as practicable.

The school will follow up unexplained absence to:

- establish the reason;
- determine the appropriate attendance code; and
- ensure that any necessary safeguarding action is taken.

Where the school cannot establish a child's whereabouts or has concerns about their welfare, safeguarding procedures will be followed. This may include contacting emergency contacts, undertaking a home visit, contacting other agencies or requesting police assistance where appropriate.

6. Illness and medical appointments

Children who are too unwell to attend school should remain at home.

The school will not routinely request medical evidence for every illness. However, where there are reasonable concerns about the authenticity or frequency of illness, or where attendance is causing concern, the school may seek appropriate evidence or work with parents and health professionals to understand the child's needs.

Routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours wherever possible.

Where an appointment must take place during the school day, children should attend school before and/or after the appointment wherever reasonably possible so that they miss the minimum amount of education.

7. Leave of absence during term time

Parents do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

The Headteacher may grant a leave of absence where permitted by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the Working Together to Improve School Attendance

framework provided by the government. Where a request is based on exceptional circumstances, each request will be considered individually.

Family holidays will **not normally be considered exceptional circumstances**.

Requests should be made in advance using the school's [Request for Leave of Absence Form](#), at least 14 days before the proposed absence.

The Headteacher will consider the circumstances of each request and, where leave is granted, determine the number of school days that may be authorised.

Leave cannot normally be authorised retrospectively.

Where leave has not been authorised, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and may result in legal intervention.

Absence for religious observance, regulated performances, employment abroad and other circumstances specifically provided for within the attendance regulations will be considered and recorded in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements.

8. Supporting good attendance

Attendance is monitored regularly so that emerging difficulties can be identified and addressed early.

Where attendance begins to cause concern, the school will work with the child and family to understand the reasons for absence and identify appropriate support.

Depending on individual circumstances, this may include:

- discussion with parents and the child;
- monitoring attendance over an agreed period;
- identifying and addressing barriers within school;
- support from the Attendance and Family Support Lead or pastoral team;
- reasonable adjustments;
- an attendance support plan;
- support from external professionals or agencies;
- working with the Local Authority; and
- formal attendance intervention where appropriate.

The school's response will be proportionate to the child's needs and circumstances.

Where support is appropriate, the school will seek to work collaboratively with families before moving to legal intervention. However, where support is not appropriate, is not engaged with, or does not result in improved attendance, formal action may be necessary.

9. Persistent and severe absence

A pupil is considered persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of possible school sessions, regardless of whether those absences are authorised or unauthorised.

A pupil is considered severely absent when they miss 50% or more of possible school sessions.

The school will pay particular attention to pupils who are persistently or severely absent, or who are at risk of becoming so.

For these pupils, the school will seek to understand the individual barriers to attendance and provide or coordinate appropriate support.

Where absence may indicate a safeguarding concern, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed.

10. Pupils with SEND, medical conditions or other additional needs

We recognise that some pupils, including those with SEND, disabilities, medical conditions or mental health needs, may experience greater barriers to attendance.

The school will work with pupils, parents and relevant professionals to understand and address these barriers.

This may include:

- reasonable adjustments;
- pastoral support;
- individual attendance or support plans;
- adaptations to routines or the school environment;
- phased reintegration following a period of absence; and
- support from external professionals.

Where a child is expected to be unable to attend school for a significant period because of their health, the school will work with the Local Authority and relevant professionals to ensure that appropriate educational arrangements are considered.

Part-time timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for the shortest time necessary and in accordance with statutory guidance.

11. Legal intervention and penalty notices

The school will work with families to improve attendance wherever appropriate. However, where absence is unauthorised and support has not been successful, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate, the school and Local Authority may use formal legal intervention.

Under the national framework, a penalty notice must be considered when a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

These sessions do not need to be consecutive and may include different types of unauthorised absence, including unauthorised term-time leave and lateness after the register has closed.

Meeting the threshold does not automatically mean that a penalty notice will be issued. The circumstances of the individual case and whether appropriate support has been provided or should be

provided will be considered in accordance with statutory guidance and Nottinghamshire County Council's Code of Conduct.

Where appropriate, a Notice to Improve may be used as a final opportunity for attendance to improve before a penalty notice is issued.

Where attendance does not improve, legal interventions may include:

- penalty notices;
- attendance prosecution;
- parenting contracts; and
- Education Supervision Orders.

The school will work with Nottinghamshire County Council when considering and implementing statutory attendance intervention.

12. Attendance registers

The school maintains its attendance register electronically using Arbor.

Registers are taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session and the appropriate national attendance code is recorded for every pupil.

The school will use the national attendance and absence codes set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current DfE guidance.

Attendance records will be retained and shared with the Department for Education and Local Authority in accordance with statutory requirements.

13. Safeguarding and children missing education

Attendance is an important part of safeguarding.

Staff will remain alert to patterns of absence, unexplained absence and changes in attendance which may indicate a safeguarding concern.

Where there are concerns about a child's welfare, staff will follow the school's Child Protection Policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

Where a child may be missing education, the school will follow its Children Missing Education procedures and work with the Local Authority.

14. Promoting and recognising attendance

The school will regularly communicate the importance of attendance and punctuality to children and families.

We will recognise and encourage good and improving attendance in ways that are inclusive and sensitive to individual circumstances.

Attendance incentives will not penalise pupils for absence relating to disability, medical conditions or other circumstances beyond their control.

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- End of year 100% attendance certificates
- Termly certificates for children achieving the school's attendance target of 96% or better
- Weekly acknowledgements for pupils that have attended school for every session that week
- Weekly attendance assembly, with the winning class receiving a reward
- Children receiving a raffle ticket for each week they fully attend, leading to an increased chance of winning a termly and end of year prize

Certain events that take place during the school year will be considered a privilege. The school has the right to remove these privileges for attendance-related reasons when necessary. Any decision to remove privileges will be taken on a case-by-case basis and will often be linked to a pupil's attendance plan/contract.

15. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year.

School leaders and the Governing Body will regularly review attendance data, including:

- whole-school attendance;
- persistent and severe absence;
- authorised and unauthorised absence;
- punctuality;
- patterns and trends over time; and
- attendance of groups of pupils who may experience additional barriers.

This information will be used to evaluate the impact of the school's approach and identify priorities for improvement.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where statutory guidance or legislation changes.



Request for Leave of Absence Form

This request for leave during term time must be made by a person with parental responsibility for the named child.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10% for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Pupil's name: Class:

Date of birth:

Home address:

.....
.....

I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school between the following dates:

Date of last day at school: Date of return to school:

Total number of school days missed:

Please explain the exceptional circumstances that make it necessary to take leave in term time. Please attach any supporting documents and include all the information you wish to be considered (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

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I am requesting for the pupil named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to further action, including the issue of a penalty notice.

Please sign and date overleaf.

Name of parent/carer making application:

Relationship to child:

Signed: Date:

Please return the completed form to school at least 14 days before the requested date for leave to allow sufficient time for this request to be reviewed. Any requests after this date will not be authorised.

Please do not make any arrangements until you know that the school will authorise your child's absence.

School use only:

Approved: YES / NO

Reason for decision:

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Name and position of decision maker:

Signed: Date:

Above 96%	Less than 8 days absence in a full academic year. Excellent attendance. Pupils should achieve the best results they can.
95%	Less than 10 days absence in a full academic year. Ideally pupils maintain an attendance of at least 96%, enabling them to make good progress and achieve.
90%	20 days absence over the year. Pupils with this attendance are missing a month of school per year and it may be difficult for them to achieve their best.
85%	30 days absence in a year. These pupils are missing 6 weeks of school a year. It will be very difficult for them to keep up and do their best.
80%	40 days absence in a year. Pupils are missing the equivalent of a year of school over five years in Primary School. It will be almost impossible to keep up and achieve their potential.