



Attendance Policy

At Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford the named persons with responsibility for Attendance are:

Author	Miss B Allen
SLT	Mr G Thompson
Governor	Mr P Rigarlsford
Designated LAC	Mr J Felton
HoS	Mr P Lavender, Mr N Stone, Mr J Felton



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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Assistant Head and headteacher

They are responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

3.3 Heads of School and Pastoral Support Lead

They are responsible for:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Head/Headteacher.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the Assistant Head/Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

3.4 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

3.5 School Admin/Office Staff

School admin/office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

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

- Present.
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity.
- Absent.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry.
- The amended entry.
- The reason for the amendment.
- The date on which the amendment was made.
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date that the pupil leaves the school.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55 am and will be kept open until 9.15 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.30 pm and will be kept open until 1.35 pm.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 10.00 am or as soon as practically possible (see also Section 7).

This should be done via an email to reception@queenelizabeths.co.uk or a call to 01507 462403.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This should be done with 24 hours' notice.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- The school will contact parents if there is persistent lateness not caused by school buses. Persistent lateness is defined as being late for 10% or more of possible sessions.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by making an initial call to parents, and following up with an email, or home visit where there may be a safeguarding concern
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to Parents

Attendance will be reported formally to parents via annual reports and parents can access up to date and on-going information about their child's attendance via the school intranet system, with their personal log on code

5. Authorised and Unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

Children and families have 175 days off school to spend together. The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We expect attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional and unavoidable reasons for absence.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as those situations which are unavoidable or significant events that are short in timescale.

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

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Other possible exceptional circumstances:

- Y11, Y12 and Y13 study leave as set by the school.
- Part time timetables agreed by the school for a period lasting no longer than 2 weeks (due to ongoing illness/anxiety).
- Death of a close family member/friend.
- Funeral of a close family member/friend.
- A housing crisis.
- Representing the country, region or county in sport or music.
- For the Lincolnshire Show as a participant, but not a visitor-evidence of participation will be needed.

5.2 Reducing Persistent Absence

A letter will be sent at the start of each new school year outlining expectations for attendance. Reference will be made that 100% attendance is the expectation and that anything under 90% is considered by law as persistent absence.

- Rewards given for 100% attendance via certificates on a termly basis and a gift for 100% attendance for the year, awarded on the last day during assembly.
- 100% - 97% 3 x a year a lottery drawn and 5 pupils receive a £20 Amazon voucher.
- 96% - 93% requires improvement. Initial tutor involvement and email or phone contact made to parents with a target made for improvement.
- 92% - 90% closer monitoring and letter home with invite for a parental meeting with HoS to set targets (Attendance Plan).
- Below 90% persistent absentee, which needs flagging to Pastoral Support Lead (PSL) and a letter of concern sent home inviting parents to come to an Attendance Panel Meeting led by HoS with PSL, and support offered. (Other agencies may be involved). Targets set.
- Attendance monitored and reviewed weekly by tutor, HoS and PSL. FPN issued if no improvement.
- No further improvement, then meeting with parents, Assistant Head, HoS and other agencies if needed. Targets set.
- NFI, meeting with Head and governor.
- NFI FPN issued by LA.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Rewards given for 100% attendance via certificates on a termly basis and a gift for 100% attendance for the year, awarded on the last day during assembly.
- 100%-97% 3 x a year a lottery drawn and 5 pupils receive a £20 Amazon voucher
- Students and parents have access to attendance records via the school intranet
- Reports are run off fortnightly and circulated to tutors, HoS, SLT by the Pastoral Support Lead to monitor
- The schools work with families and other agencies to support promoting attendance.

7. Attendance Monitoring

The Pastoral Support Lead at our school monitors pupil absence on a fortnightly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see Section 4.2).

A parent or carer must contact the school on each day of the child's absence.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continues to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider a support plan to improve attendance.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

The school uses its intranet and Integris to collect and store attendance data.

The school runs fortnightly reports on student attendance. This monitors those pupils who fall below 97% attendance with a particular focus on those who are persistent absentees (90% and below). See pyramid attached.

The Pastoral Support Lead will monitor those pupils who are in danger of falling below 90%, using the EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) pathway as and when needed. Support for pupils and parents will be identified and put into place. See pyramid attached.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by the Assistant Head (Pastoral). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody

Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Standard Letters to Parents

Address

Dear Mr (one letter to each parent)

Dear Mrs

Childs Name

DOB

(Date)

Date

Dear Parent / Carer

School Attendance

I am writing to all parents and carers to remind you of the importance of regular school attendance which is a priority for your child and our school. There is a very strong link between regular school attendance and achievement, and if your child is frequently absent from school, this greatly reduces the chance of them reaching their full potential.

Remember 90% attendance sounds good if it is in a test but 90% attendance throughout your child's school career means over one year's absence!

I am sure you will also agree that it is essential that our pupils arrive at school on time, ready to begin learning, and also understand the importance of being on time to lessons.

We expect attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional and unavoidable reasons for absence. To improve attendance, we have to work together. If something is preventing your child from coming to school, please come and talk to us about it.

From the beginning of this academic year, we will look at the attendance of every pupil in our school. We aim to review each child's attendance every fortnight.

If your child's attendance falls below 92%, you will receive a letter setting an attendance target for the next four weeks and a meeting will be arranged with the Head of School and Tutor.

Should this target not be reached, you will be invited to a School Attendance Panel Meeting which will give you four weeks to meet a new attendance target. Failure to attend this meeting could result in a Formal Legal Warning Letter.

This procedure may be shortened if your child's attendance is less than 80% and has not improved over the following four-week period. I would also like to make you aware that a request for leave of absence will not be granted for the purpose of a holiday **unless the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional.**

If you wish to seek approval for any request of absence for your child(ren) from School, then you must apply in writing to the Head Teacher, **at least four weeks in advance of the requested absence**. You should only then remove your child(ren) if the absence has been authorized and notified to you in writing by the School. Any exceptional circumstances must be clearly set out in the written request to the Head Teacher, who will consider each case upon its merits.

If you then choose to take your child out of school during term time and it is **not** deemed to be exceptional circumstances and/or has not been approved by the School, then this will be coded as an unauthorised absence and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued for the period of absence. Failure to pay the Fixed Penalty may result in further legal action being taken against you.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children at their school under the following legislation:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £60.00 or £120.00 per parent.**

Please note: A Fixed Penalty Notice can also be issued if your child is seen in a public place within the first 5 days of an exclusion from their school.

- **Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 makes it a duty for parents in relation to pupils subject to a fixed period or permanent exclusion to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during the first five days of any such exclusion. If a child is present in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion during school hours the parent may be guilty of an offence for which they can be prosecuted by the LA before a magistrates' court or issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice for £60.00 or £120.00.**

If you have any concerns or queries regarding the above, please contact myself or Miss Allen. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Here at QEGS we are determined to make attendance and achievement a high priority. We are sure you will help us with this and give your child the best possible chance to succeed. Please ensure they attend school every day and arrive on time.

Yours sincerely

Mr G Thompson
Headteacher

(Date)

(Address)

Dear

NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON:

FORM:

ATTENDANCE:

We have noticed that (name) has fallen below 92% and would therefore like to invite you to a meeting in school on (date and time) to set an attendance target.

During this meeting we will discuss how we can work together to help (name) to meet their target.

We need to draw your attention to the fact that parents have a duty in law to ensure their child attends school regularly, unless they are unable to do so by reasons of ill health or any other legally acceptable reason.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact me on 01507 462403 to arrange a more convenient time. Should you subsequently not arrive for the meeting, it will go ahead as planned and a copy of the attendance target and action plan sent to you.

Yours sincerely

(Head of Year / Tutor)

(Date)

(Address)

Dear

NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON:

FORM:

ATTENDANCE:

We are concerned about (name)'s school attendance. Therefore, we would like to invite you to an Attendance Panel Meeting to be held at school on (date and time).

During this meeting we will discuss how we can work together to improve (name) attendance.

We need to draw your attention to the fact that parents have a duty in law to ensure their child attends school regularly, unless they are unable to do so by reasons of ill health or any other legally acceptable reason.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact me on 01507 462403 to arrange a more convenient time. Should you subsequently not arrive for the meeting, it will go ahead as planned and a copy of the action plan sent to you.

Yours sincerely



Miss B Allen
Assistant Headteacher

(Date)

(Address)

Dear

Fixed Penalty Formal Warning

NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON:

DATE OF BIRTH:

PUPIL REGISTERED AT: Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

This letter is a **Fixed Penalty Formal Warning** and is being sent to you because your child has an unacceptable level of unauthorised absence.

During the period (date) to (date), (name) was absent on () sessions out of () possible half-day sessions of which () were unauthorised.

(name) attendance will be reviewed from the date of this warning, with the expectation that his/her attendance increases to 100%. Failure to comply may result in a Fixed Penalty being issued.

Please note if your child's attendance has fallen below 90% due to illness or a medical condition you will be required to provide evidence showing that you have sought appropriate medical advice.

Requesting the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children attending their school under the following legal framework:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £60.00 or £120.00.**

Should you wish to discuss this matter further or to access appropriate support, please contact the school on the above contact details.

Yours sincerely



Miss B Allen

Assistant Headteacher

(Date)

(Address)

Dear

NAME OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON:

FORM:

ATTENDANCE:

On the (date of letter of concern) I wrote to you expressing concern regarding (name) attendance. I am very pleased to be able to acknowledge the improving situation and increase in (name) attendance which is now at %.

We appreciate your on-going support with (name) school attendance and would like to help you to support (him/her) in attaining a high level of attendance and maximising (his/her) full potential in school.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss any concerns you may have which could impact on (name) progress, either now or in the future.

Yours sincerely



Miss B Allen
Assistant Headteacher

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, Alford

Attendance Pyramid

Fixed Penalty Notice issued by LA followed by Education Supervision Order if no improvement

Meeting with Headteacher and Governor

No further improvement – Meeting with Assistant Head & Head of School

Attendance monitored and reviewed weekly by Head of School & WH. Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter will be issued if no improvement

Below 90% *Persistent Absence - Letter of concern sent home and Attendance Panel Meeting arranged with student, parent /carer, Head of School. Pastoral support offered. Other agencies may become involved

90% - 92% Closely Monitored - Head of School & Tutor involvement, letter home and meeting arranged with parent / carer. Attendance target set

93% - 96% Requires Improvement - Initial Tutor involvement, discussion with student and email sent to parent / carer

97% - 100% - Good Attendance

100% Excellent Attendance - Students Rewarded

* A Persistent Absentee is considered to be one with 10% absence or more.