Orwell Park School

Part of the Benenden Family of Schools

Attendance Policy

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"Attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide-ranging and can be complex, both within and beyond the school gates. They are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn."

Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024),

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

This policy applies to the whole School, including EYFS.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has been developed with reference to the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (updated July 2026), the School

Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and the statutory guidance *Children missing education* (September 2025).

It also takes account of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, relevant guidance relating to mental health and school attendance, the Equality Act 2010 and the additional UKVI requirements applying to pupils sponsored by the school.

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment
- Working Together to improve school attendance DfE Guidance July 2026

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
    - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- The Chair of the Pastoral, Safeguarding & Wellbeing Committee, shall hold the Head to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Head

The Head is responsible for:

- The 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHCP) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance

The DSL (& Attendance Lead) is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with the SLT, Early Help Team, SENDCo, Heads of Year and Tutors regarding individual pupils
- Liaising with pupils, parents/guardians and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/guardians

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The Designated Senior Leader for Attendance is: Jo Coventry-King and can be contacted via email at jocoventryking@orwellpark.org

3.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Consulted whenever absence patterns may indicate neglect, abuse, or safeguarding concerns.
- Ensures rapid escalation to local authority or other agencies if pupils are missing from education.

3.5 The Heads of Boarding

The Heads of Boarding are responsible for ensuring that all pupils are safely accounted for throughout the evening and overnight, and that accurate attendance records are maintained in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.

The Heads of Boarding are responsible for:

- **Evening attendance:** Ensuring the 6.45pm register is completed and checked against parental sign-out records so that all pupils are accounted for, and any discrepancies are investigated immediately.
- **Boarding registration:** Ensuring pupils are registered as they enter the boarding houses, with records accurately transferred to iSAMS by boarding staff on duty.
- **Overnight safety:** Ensuring accurate overnight registers are maintained, including details of pupils' usual sleeping arrangements and any changes, such as room moves, authorised absences or pupils sleeping in Surgery.
- **Fire safety:** Ensuring printed overnight registers are checked and provided to all staff on fire duty, with any subsequent changes communicated promptly and records updated.
- **Missing pupils:** Ensuring any unexplained absence or missing pupil is investigated immediately, following the school's Missing Child Policy.
- **Staff responsibilities:** Ensuring boarding staff understand and consistently follow registration, handover, missing pupil and emergency procedures, and know the whereabouts of pupils in their care or how to establish them promptly.
- **Safeguarding records:** Ensuring registers and sign-out sheets are accurate, securely maintained and recognised as important safeguarding documents.
- **UKVI information sharing:** Ensuring that any unexplained absence, extended leave, failure to return to boarding, or changes to travel, guardianship or accommodation arrangements involving a UKVI-sponsored pupil are communicated promptly to the school's authorised UKVI staff and the DSL/Attendance Lead. This enables the school to monitor sponsorship requirements and make any necessary reports to UKVI within the required timescales.

All boarding staff are responsible for completing registers accurately, knowing which pupils are in their care, communicating any changes to pupil whereabouts and immediately reporting any missing pupil or safeguarding concern to the senior member of staff on duty.

3.6 SENDCo

- Supports pupils with SEND facing barriers to attendance.
- Advises on reasonable adjustments and interventions.

3.7 Class Teachers/Form Tutors

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office in the morning and afternoon.

3.8 School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/guardians about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/guardians to the Head of Section/Year/Pastoral lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Communicate with the DSL & Attendance Lead whenever any concerns arise and ensure day-to-day information around absence is passed on to the correct people.

3.9 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.00am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.10 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

The school maintains its admission and attendance registers electronically through iSAMS. These registers are kept in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

The school will:

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date admission and attendance registers for all pupils, including those in EYFS.
- Take attendance at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.
- Record attendance using the statutory DfE attendance codes.
- Preserve the original entry and an audit trail whenever a register entry is amended.
- Make a backup copy of both registers at least once a month.
- Retain register entries and backup copies for the statutory retention periods.
- Notify the local authority of additions to and deletions from the admission register where required.
- Make the required attendance and sickness returns to the local authority.
- Only remove pupils from the admission register where the statutory conditions for deletion have been met.

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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.00am or 8.15am (Pre-Prep) on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 0800 and will be kept open until 0830.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1430 and will be kept open until 1445.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.00am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01473 659225 or opsreception@orwellpark.org

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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 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 notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should email the school with the request in advance.

However, we encourage parents 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 or guardian 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

4.5 Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the Police or Social Services.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

Where a pupil cannot be located, their whereabouts are unknown or the school has concerns about their safety, the matter will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts and will contact the local authority and other relevant agencies as necessary.

The school will not wait for an absence threshold to be reached where there are immediate safeguarding concerns. Where a pupil may be missing education, the school will follow the statutory Children Missing Education guidance and work with the relevant local authority.

4.6 Reporting to Parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels via their written reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for Term-time Absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the Head's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health 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 parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Parent(s) 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Notices to Improve

Where attendance concerns continue despite appropriate support, the school may work with the local authority to consider further action.

This may include a formal notice to improve or other attendance intervention, where appropriate and in accordance with the relevant statutory guidance.

Any enforcement action will be considered in partnership with the local authority, taking account of the pupil's individual circumstances, safeguarding needs and any special educational needs or disabilities.

Reporting

Under the 2024 Regulations, the school must meet the applicable local authority notification requirements. These include:

- **Ten consecutive school days of unauthorised absence:** a return is required for a compulsory-school-age non-boarder when the relevant absence criteria are met.

- **Fifteen school days of sickness:** a sickness return is required when there are reasonable grounds to believe a compulsory-school-age pupil will reach 15 days of sickness absence, either continuously or cumulatively during the school year. The statutory sickness-return duty is not limited to non-boarders.

- **Admission register changes:** applicable new-pupil and deletion returns must be made within the statutory timescales, including the **five-day new-pupil notification rule** and advance deletion notification where required.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

We are proud of our consistently high attendance figures. We believe that good attendance is a reflection of a positive school environment, strong partnerships with families, and an engaging curriculum that children are eager to be part of. We take a proactive and supportive approach to promoting attendance. We work closely with pupils and parents to ensure that every child is supported to attend school regularly.

6.1 Positive Parent Partnerships

We place a strong emphasis on working collaboratively with families. Regular, open communication with parents allows us to address any attendance concerns early and sensitively. We support parents in understanding the importance of attendance, and we are always available to discuss any challenges they may be facing in ensuring their child's regular attendance.

6.2 Engaging, Varied Curriculum

Our pupils want to come to school because learning here is exciting and varied. We offer a broad, rich curriculum that includes:

- A wide range of extra-curricular activities
- Regular themed days, workshops, and educational visits
- Special projects and creative learning opportunities
- Access to specialist teaching in areas such as music, drama, languages, and sport

This means that school is not just a place for academic learning, but a place where every day brings something new and stimulating.

6.3 Supportive Interventions Where Needed

Although our attendance is very strong, we do monitor attendance data closely to identify any emerging patterns or concerns. When a pupil's attendance falls below expectations:

- We contact parents to discuss any underlying issues and offer appropriate support.
- Where appropriate, we may invite families in for a supportive attendance meeting to explore solutions together. We understand that inconsistent attendance can be an indication of more complex concerns.

6.4 Creating a Sense of Belonging

We foster a strong sense of community and belonging. Our pupils feel known, valued, and cared for. When children feel emotionally secure and part of a welcoming environment, they are more likely to want to attend regularly.

Parents and pupils understand that attendance matters and that it is a shared responsibility between home and school.

6.5 Proactive Wellbeing Support

As part of our *Orwellbeing Framework*, we are committed to supporting pupils' mental health and promoting positive wellbeing throughout the school community. We understand that emotional wellbeing is closely linked to attendance, and that children are more likely to attend school regularly when they feel safe, supported, and understood.

We take a proactive approach by teaching pupils the skills they need to build resilience and manage challenges effectively. Through our PSHE curriculum (Life Skills), assemblies, and pastoral care systems, we equip pupils with:

- **Emotional regulation techniques including the zones of regulation**
- **Problem-solving skills**
- **Healthy coping strategies for anxiety, change, or setbacks**
- **Confidence in seeking help when needed**
- **A growth mindset and positive self-talk**

These skills are embedded in daily school life and are reinforced through a culture of kindness, openness, and mutual respect.

Staff are trained to recognise early signs of emotional distress and work sensitively with children and families to offer timely support. Where needed, we also involve our pastoral team or external professionals to ensure that children receive the appropriate help.

By creating an environment where wellbeing is prioritised, we help pupils develop the inner resources they need to attend school consistently and engage fully with their learning.

7. Attendance Monitoring

Attendance is monitored via ISAMS, and reviewed on a regular basis by the Deputy Head Pastoral and the DSL.

7.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

7.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

Where pupils experience significant barriers to attendance, including those associated with SEND, disability, anxiety or emotionally based school avoidance, the school will work with the pupil, family and relevant professionals to identify suitable support.

Where a temporary part-time timetable is necessary, this will be agreed with parents, recorded in writing, kept under regular review and include a clear plan for returning to full-time education. Such arrangements will be used only in appropriate individual circumstances and not as a long-term alternative to suitable full-time provision.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority, UKVI and/or DfE is updated, and will be reviewed annually.

9. Safeguarding & Welfare Links

Attendance monitoring is part of safeguarding.

- Missing pupils or unexplained absence may indicate **neglect, abuse or mental health concerns.**
- Policy links to:
    - Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
    - Behaviour Policy
    - SEND Policy
    - Missing Child Policy

      Available here: https://www.orwellpark.co.uk/policies-compliance

10. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Sponsored Pupils

10.1 Our responsibilities as a Student Sponsor

Orwell Park School is committed to meeting its responsibilities as a licensed Student Sponsor under UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements.

The school recognises that pupils studying in the UK under a Child Student visa have additional requirements relating to attendance, immigration status, safeguarding and care arrangements.

The school will ensure that these pupils are appropriately supported and that the necessary records are maintained and reports made to UKVI.

These additional responsibilities apply to pupils whom Orwell Park School sponsors under the Child Student or Student immigration routes. Pupils holding other types of immigration permission may have different conditions, which will be checked individually.

10.2 Monitoring attendance

All sponsored pupils are expected to attend school regularly and punctually, in accordance with this Attendance Policy.

The school will:

- Record attendance accurately through iSAMS and follow up unexplained absences promptly.
- Maintain a clear record of attendance, authorised absence, unauthorised absence and the reasons for absence.
- Monitor attendance and participation in expected educational and pastoral activities.
- Ensure that attendance information is accessible to the staff responsible for UKVI sponsorship.
- Keep appropriate records of communication with parents and guardians regarding absence.

Where a sponsored pupil is absent because of illness or another approved reason, the school will record the reason and retain suitable supporting evidence where necessary.

10.3 Unexplained absence and missed contact points

The school has an additional responsibility to monitor expected contact points for pupils sponsored under the Child Student or Student visa routes.

Contact points are expected opportunities for the school to establish that a pupil is participating in their education. These may include attendance at lessons, registration, assessments and formal pastoral activities.

Where a sponsored pupil is unexpectedly absent, the school will follow its normal first-day absence procedures and inform the member of staff responsible for UKVI sponsorship.

Where a pupil misses consecutive expected contact points without permission, the school will investigate promptly and keep a record of its enquiries.

Under UKVI sponsorship requirements, **10 consecutive missed expected contact points** is an important reporting threshold.

Where this threshold is reached, the school will review the circumstances and take the action required by the UKVI guidance, including reporting and withdrawal of sponsorship where applicable.

For sponsors with Student Sponsor status, UKVI permits specific reporting arrangements, including reporting following the tenth missed contact or using two checkpoints within a rolling 12-month period. The school will follow its approved reporting arrangements and the guidance applicable to its sponsor status.

The school will not automatically withdraw sponsorship because a pupil has been absent for a specified number of school days. Each case will be considered in accordance with UKVI requirements, with appropriate attention to illness, approved absence, safeguarding and the pupil's welfare.

Any decision to continue sponsorship exceptionally, where reporting or withdrawal would otherwise be expected, must be clearly documented and supported by appropriate evidence.

10.4 Reporting to UKVI

The school's authorised UKVI sponsorship staff will make all required reports through the Sponsorship Management System (SMS), within the relevant reporting deadlines.

Matters that may require reporting include:

- A sponsored pupil failing to enrol within the agreed enrolment period.
- A pupil missing the required number of consecutive expected contact points without permission, where the relevant reporting conditions are met.
- A pupil withdrawing from school, being permanently excluded or otherwise ceasing to be sponsored.
- A pupil deferring or interrupting their studies where this affects their sponsorship.
- Significant changes to a pupil's circumstances, including changes affecting their eligibility to study or their permitted care arrangements.
- Information suggesting that a pupil is in breach of their visa conditions.

Many changes must be reported **within 10 working days**, although the applicable timescale will depend on the circumstances and the reporting requirement.

The school will keep a record of reports submitted to UKVI, including the reason for the report, the date of submission and any relevant correspondence.

UKVI reporting requirements are separate from the school's responsibilities to notify the local authority about attendance concerns or children missing education. Both processes will be followed where necessary.

10.5 Immigration status and record keeping

The school will maintain the records required by UKVI for every pupil it sponsors.

These will include, where applicable:

- Copies of the pupil's passport and evidence of their immigration permission, including their eVisa.
- Confirmation of the pupil's entitlement to study in the UK.
- The pupil's date of entry to the UK, where required.
- Current UK residential address and contact details.
- Contact details for parents, guardians and relevant carers.
- Attendance and absence records, including relevant supporting evidence.
- Parental consent and care arrangement documentation.
- Records of significant changes to the pupil's circumstances and any reports made to UKVI.

The school will monitor the expiry dates of sponsored pupils' immigration permission and seek updated evidence when required.

Records will be stored securely and retained in accordance with UKVI requirements, data protection legislation and the school's record retention procedures.

10.6 Boarding, guardianship and care arrangements

The school recognises its additional safeguarding responsibilities for international pupils, particularly those who board or stay with guardians or carers in the UK.

For sponsored pupils, the school will:

- Ensure that suitable, legally permitted care and accommodation arrangements are in place.
- Obtain and retain the necessary parental consent for travel, study and care arrangements.
- Maintain accurate information about where the pupil will live during term time, weekends and school holidays.
- Check that guardianship and care arrangements meet the relevant UKVI requirements.
- Record appropriate travel and collection arrangements, particularly where a nominated guardian is responsible for the pupil.
- Obtain updated parental consent and other documents where care arrangements change.
- Notify the appropriate local authority of private fostering arrangements when required.
- Inform UKVI if the school becomes aware that a sponsored pupil is living in an arrangement which does not meet the applicable immigration requirements.

Pupils sponsored under the Child Student route must live in an arrangement permitted by the Immigration Rules.

A nominated guardian may provide temporary care for less than 28 continuous days but must not be used as a substitute for an appropriate long-term care arrangement.

The school will ensure that pupils' welfare and safeguarding needs remain the priority in all decisions relating to travel, accommodation and guardianship.

10.7 Absence, overseas travel and extended leave

Parents and guardians of sponsored pupils must notify the school in advance of proposed travel outside the UK during term time.

Any request for absence will be considered under the school's normal attendance procedures, alongside the pupil's immigration and sponsorship requirements.

The school will:

- Check the reason for and expected duration of the absence.
- Consider whether the absence can be authorised.
- Record the pupil's expected return date and relevant travel or care arrangements.
- Consider any impact on the pupil's immigration permission and continued sponsorship.
- Follow up immediately if the pupil does not return when expected.

The school will not assume that overseas travel, extended absence or temporary remote learning automatically meets the conditions of a sponsored pupil's visa.

Where a proposed absence or interruption to studies could affect sponsorship, the school's authorised UKVI staff will review the circumstances before arrangements are agreed.

10.8 Responsibilities and Oversight

The Head has overall responsibility for ensuring that the school meets its UKVI sponsorship obligations.

The school's nominated UKVI Authorising Officer and authorised Sponsorship Management System users are responsible for ensuring that required notifications and reports are made.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, as the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance, will work closely with Admissions, the Heads of Boarding and authorised UKVI staff to identify, monitor and follow up any attendance, safeguarding or welfare concerns involving sponsored pupils, ensuring information is shared promptly to meet UKVI reporting requirements.

Staff who become aware of unexplained absence, changes in care arrangements or concerns about a sponsored pupil's immigration circumstances must inform the relevant senior staff promptly.

The school will periodically review the attendance, immigration status and care arrangements of sponsored pupils to ensure that its records remain accurate and its sponsorship duties are met.

This section will be reviewed whenever relevant UKVI guidance or immigration requirements change.

11. Monitoring Attendance and Safeguarding in Boarding

Relevant National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (May 2026): Standards 8.1–8.2, 9.4, 10.1–10.2 and 20.3–20.6.

The school recognises that accurate monitoring of pupils' whereabouts is an essential part of safeguarding, particularly during the transition from the school day to evening boarding arrangements. Clear registration, sign-out and checking procedures ensure that all pupils are accounted for and that boarding staff know which children are in their care.

The following procedures are in place:

- **End-of-day collection:** Parents collecting day pupils are required to sign their children out when leaving the school. These records provide confirmation of which pupils have left the school site.
- **Evening registration:** An evening register is taken at 6.45pm. This is checked against the parental sign-out records by the lead member of staff on duty to ensure that all pupils are accounted for.
- **Checking discrepancies:** Any pupil who is not accounted for is followed up immediately. (See Missing Child Policy) Staff check available records and make enquiries to establish the pupil's whereabouts. If a pupil cannot be located promptly, the school's missing pupil and safeguarding procedures are followed, including escalation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and emergency services where appropriate.
- **Boarding house registration:** Boarding staff on duty register pupils as they enter the boarding house. Attendance is recorded on a sign in sheet and then transferred to iSAMS, providing an accurate record of pupils present in each boarding house.
- **Night-time and fire safety:** Once boarding registration is complete, the boarding register is printed, checked and distributed to all staff with fire-duty responsibilities. Any changes to usual sleeping arrangements, including room changes or pupils staying away from boarding, are clearly marked so that staff know where each pupil is expected to sleep. This includes ill children who may be sleeping in the surgery.
- **Changes during the evening:** Any subsequent changes to pupil whereabouts or sleeping arrangements are communicated promptly to relevant boarding and fire-duty staff, and the attendance records and fire-duty lists are updated as necessary.

Registers and sign-out records are important safeguarding documents. They must be completed accurately, checked carefully and kept readily accessible to authorised staff. Boarding staff must know the whereabouts of pupils in their care, or be able to establish their whereabouts promptly, throughout the evening and overnight.

The Heads of Boarding are responsible for ensuring these procedures are consistently followed. Any unexplained absence, discrepancy or concern about a pupil's whereabouts must be investigated immediately and escalated in accordance with the school's safeguarding and missing pupil procedures.

These arrangements support the school's responsibilities under the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, particularly Standard 20.5 (knowledge of boarders' whereabouts), Standard 20.6 (procedures for missing boarders) and Standard 10 (fire precautions and emergency arrangements).

Appendix 1: Attendance Terms

The following terms 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
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays