

Attendance Policy 2024-2025

Our small school community welcomes everyone and aspires to meet the needs of all through high expectations, Christian values and compassionate support. We strive to create a firm foundation for all to fulfil their potential as future citizens of the world. Our challenging, exciting learning environment enables everyone to go forward as champions of compassion, curiosity and courage.

Jesus answered, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it: love your neighbour as you love yourself. Matthew 22:v.37-40

This policy has been reviewed in response to Working Together to Improve School Attendance, 19 August 2024:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

At St Partney C of E Primary School, we understand that most children will have days when they are not able to go to school, whether that is due to illness or a family emergency, and the occasional day off is unlikely to affect their education. However, missing too much school can be seriously detrimental to learning and social interactions. The school attendance champion will be the main point of contact regarding attendance, and is required to monitor all attendance.

Leadership and management

Executive Head Teacher: S Addison

Head of School: T Leverton

Senior Attendance Champion: S Addison

Attendance Officers: A Ziller (SBM) & C Blades (Office)

Governor Attendance Champion: J Lennon and M Tupholme.

The law on attendance and right to a full-time education

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Parents who have chosen to register their child at Partney C of E Primary School have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly. This means every day that school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances, such as being too ill to attend, religious observance or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school (see section; Requesting leave of absence).

Relationships and communication

Partney C of E Primary School aims to build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them. We will adhere to the expectations laid out in the National Guidance of Working together to improve attendance (August 2024):

Working together to improve attendance

14. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

Monitor

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

Listen and understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Retaining and amending registers

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register.

Admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with their starting date, information regarding parents, and details of the last school attended.

A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies.

All schools must take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. Therefore 1 day of absence = 2 sessions missed.

Attendance and punctuality expectations

Partney C of E Primary School Registration Information:

Morning registration **opens at 8:35am**. Morning registration **closes at 8:55am**.

The school gates open at **8:35am and are closed at 8:45am**. A child arriving after the gates close between 8.45am and 8.55am will be marked as late into school (L), before the close of registers. We expect parents or carers to bring the children into school via the main office, giving reasons for lateness.

Children arriving after **8:55am** will be marked as late (U), after the close of registers.

Afternoon registration is at 1:00pm.

Partney C of E Primary School will use the national codes (see Appendix A) to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent manner. The data is used by schools, local authorities and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education.

Reporting unexpected absence

An unexpected absence is when the absence has not been planned in advance, e.g. due to illness.

Unexpected absence should be reported to the school by telephone (01790 753319) or email (enquiries@partney.lincs.sch.uk) before **8:55am** on the first day that the child is absent, and every following day of absence. A reason for the unexpected absence must be given.

Partney C of E Primary School staff and parents should refer to NHS guidance regarding information about a child being too ill for school: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Pupils Not Attending Regularly (PNAR) will be reported to the Local Authority on the 10th day of consecutive absence.

Unexplained absence

Failure to notify the school of absence, or unaccounted absence at the close of registers, will be followed up by a member of the school office team. In the first instance by text. If no response via text, then the school office will telephone parents, carers or other named responsible adult listed on the child's contact details retained by school.

In the case of no contact with family, a member of the senior leadership team will decide on the most appropriate next steps, to ensure that there are no safeguarding concerns related to the non-attendance.

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for ten consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority through the *Children Missing in Education* reporting process.

Requesting leaves of absence

All schools can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. The parent/carer who the pupil normally lives with can request this in advance using a **Leave of Absence Form** available from the school office or school website.

All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances below:

- Taking part in a regulated performance.
- Attending an interview – for entry into another educational institution.
- Study leave – for public examinations – this must be agreed in advance with the parent/carer who the pupil normally lives with and the school.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable – this must be agreed in advance with the parent/carer who the pupil normally lives with and the school.
- Exceptional circumstances – at the discretion of the Head Teacher. (In the case of Partney C of E Primary School which is a Local Authority maintained school, requests for leave must be made in advance by a parent/carer who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.)

Generally, the Department for Education (DfE) does not consider a need or a desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

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

An approved leave of absence will be marked as authorised. Failure to complete a request of leave of absence in advance, or unapproved leave, will be marked as unauthorised.

Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.

Where possible, we encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents should notify school in advance by showing proof of the appointment to a member of the school office team. This absence will then be authorised (Code M) for the session that is missed due to the appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs to be recorded for that session.

As part of **Administering medications in school policy 2024**, most prescribed medication can be administered at school. Non-prescribed medication, such as pain relief, may be administered at school at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

Absence due to mental or physical ill health

Section 100 of the Children and Families Act, 2014 places a duty on schools to make arrangements for all pupils with medical conditions in terms of both physical and mental health. Whilst section 19 of the Education Act (1996) requires local authority to arrange suitable (so far as health allows) full-time (if suitable) education for children who would otherwise not receive education because of their illness.

A GP or other medical clinician can advise, but not authorise, school absence. In cases of both long term physical and/or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat such conditions, but they are expected to work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil.

Partney C of E Primary School follows the Lincolnshire Emotionally Based School Avoidance pathway to support pupils identified as such: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/support-education/emotional-based-school-avoidance-ebbsa/2>

From August 2024, schools are required, (as part of the statutory guidance [Working together to improve school attendance](#)), to inform the Local Authority of sickness returns of 15 days consecutively or cumulatively absent because of illness.

Education off site

As well as the above leaves of absence, all schools can also allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings:

- To attend another school at which the pupil is dual registered.
- To attend provision as arranged by the local authority, e.g. as part of an education, health, care plan or alternative provision.
- To participate in an approved sporting activity.
- To attend an educational visit or trip arranged by the school.

Pupils with a social worker and/or Child in Care

Partney C of E Primary School will notify allocated social workers and/or allocated workers from the Virtual School, if there are unexplained absences.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

SEN Support - at Partney C of E Primary School this is a pupil on the SEND register with an Individual Education Plan (IEP). However, no specific provisions apply, so the expectations regarding attendance are the same as for a pupil who is not in receipt of SEND support.

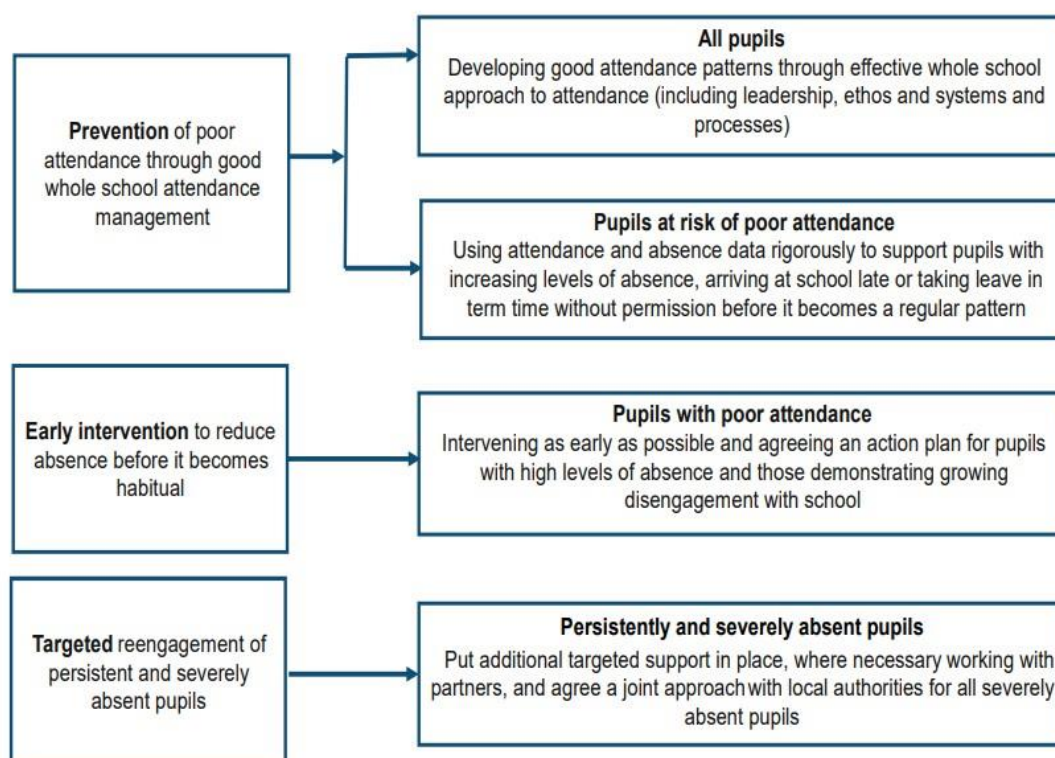
Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) – Partney C of E Primary School will notify the allocated Local Authority caseworker if there are issues emerging over attendance.

Strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence

School Attendance - boundaries and description	
Boundary	Description
95-100%	As expected
91-94%	At risk of persistent absence
80-90%	Persistent absence
51-79%	At risk of severe absence
<=50%	Severe absence

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the most effective schools recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. Partney C of E Primary School will work to help remove the barriers to attendance that families experience. Partney C of E Primary School will follow the suggested effective school attendance improvement and management pathway:

Effective school attendance improvement and management



Partney C of E Primary:

- a) Seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for achieving their potential;
- b) Weekly attendance data will be analysed to understand which children are at risk of persistent or severe absence.
- c) Requires staff to work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends regularly and punctually;
- d) Will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate external agencies to provide information, advice and support. Support offered to families may include informal work with our Deputy Head Teacher, Family Support Worker or a Pastoral Support Worker, or more formally via an Early Help Assessment (EHA), or a Team Around the Child meeting (TAC).
- e) Will challenge those parents and pupils who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- f) Will work with other agencies and professional bodies as appropriate to support parents, including (but not restricted to) Education Welfare Officers, Children's Services, Pupil Reintegration Team, Lincolnshire Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) pathway.

Expectations of parents

Securing a high level of attendance requires **Parents/Carers** to work closely with the school. It is essential parents/carers:

- Ensure their child arrives on time for school; **gates open at 8:35am**.
- Contact the school at an early stage about any concerns they have about their child's attendance.
- Recognise that the school will be concerned when any child fails to meet the attendance target and work with us to improve their child's attendance.

Parents of pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence will be regularly notified of attendance % via letter. If there are concerns for attendance the Senior Attendance Champion will contact parents to discuss further. This may result in an informal or formal support, decided in agreement with parents, on a case by case basis.

Parents of a pupil of compulsory school age, registered at Partney C of E Primary School, who fails to attend regularly, may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the Local Authority (see Penalty Notice section below).

Penalty notices (Fines)

A National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absences, including unauthorised leave of absence has been introduced following changes to the law (August 2024).

If a pupil has 10 unauthorised sessions, which is equal to 5 school days, within a 10 week period, this will be reported by Partney C of E Primary School to the local authority attendance team, and a penalty notice may be issued.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be **£80 if paid within 21 days**, or **£160 if paid within 28 days**. This rate is in line with inflation and is the first increase since 2012. Fines will be per parent, per child.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

For any further inquiries about school attendance please visit: www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-attendance

Elective Home Education (EHE)

The 1996 Education Act (section 7) places a legal responsibility upon parents or carers to ensure that their child receives an appropriate, full time and effective education (suitable to their educational needs).

The first step in the process of electing to home educate your child is to discuss this with school. If after this discussion, you still want to home educate your child, you must write to the Head Teacher, stating your intentions to withdraw your child from the school roll in order to home educate them.

The school will then inform the local authority elective home education team.

If your child has never been to school or you have moved to Lincolnshire, contact ehe@lincolnshire.gov.uk or call 01522 782030.

More information about this can be found: <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-attendance/home-education>

Senior Attendance Champion

If you wish to discuss attendance/lateness please contact the school **Senior Attendance Champion, Miss S Addison**

01790 753319

Appendix A - Attendance and Absence Codes

Partney C of E Primary School will use attendance codes as listed in Chapter 8:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

Appendix B - Request for Leave of Absence

All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Partney C of E Primary School is maintained by the Local Authority and must do so under the circumstances listed below.

Please clearly indicate which specific circumstance you are requesting leave of absence for.

Generally, the Department for Education does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

Please note that only the parent or carer that the child normally lives with may make this request.

See form below:

<u>PARENT SECTION</u>			
Name of child			
Date of Birth		Year Group	
Name of parent or carer			
Address of child			
Post Code			
Contact telephone numbers	Name & Number		
	Name & Number		
<p><u>Request for leave of absence due to (please tick):</u></p>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Taking part in a regulated performance or employment in line with a licence issued by a Local Authority		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attending an interview for entry into another educational institution		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Study leave for a public examination		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exceptional circumstances		
<p>Extra information here for consideration. All applications will be considered individually taking into account specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context.</p>			
Start date of absence			
Date of return to school			
Number of school days missed			
Signature of parent/guardian / carer	Date		

SCHOOL SECTION

Current attendance	%	No. of previous applications	
Absence from school	Authorised		Unauthorised

Length of time agreed for absence	
Signature of Head Teacher	