



ABINGDON
HOUSE SCHOOL

School Attendance Policy

Responsible Person:	Headteacher
Last Review Date:	September 2024
Review Cycle:	Annual
Next Review Date:	September 2025

Abingdon House School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Abingdon House School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

The school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance

[Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- Educare (online CPD)
- SchoolPro (data protection)
- Marsh Commercial (insurance)

Where this policy refers to 'employees', the term refers to any individual that is classified as an employee or a worker, working with and on behalf of the school (including volunteers and contractors).

Abingdon House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Abingdon House School.

The policy documents of Abingdon House School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Every child in Abingdon House School is welcomed, valued and respected and also encouraged to respect themselves and others. Our aim is to empower all children to gain the essential skills both academic and social that will equip them for life.

1.2 As part of Cavendish Education Abingdon House School believes that education is essential for all and for children to achieve their full potential regular attendance and punctuality is required. Non-attendance for any reason is an important issue that is treated promptly and seriously. In all cases of non-attendance it is essential that early action is taken.

1.3 The Governing Board, Principals, Headteacher and school staff of Abingdon House School acknowledge that there is a strong correlation between high attendance and student progress.

1.4 Abingdon House School adheres to the DfE Guidance [Working together to improve school attendance](#) (August 2024) and applies the recommendations relating to using student registers and attendance codes.

2. Aims

2.1 The aim of this policy is to promote the 'most effective education for students at Abingdon House School. In order to achieve this, it is vital that students attend school consistently and punctually. In order that students and parents cooperate with this policy and students gain their full entitlement to education, parents will be informed of the requirements on attendance at Abingdon House School.

2.2 We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- promoting good attendance
- reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- ensuring every student 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 ensure students have the support in place to attend school

3. Legislation and guidance

3.1 This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). It is drawn from relevant legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance, including:

- 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 \(student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

3.2 It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- promoting the importance of school attendance across the schools with the use and implementation of policies and ethos
- making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- monitoring attendance figures for the whole group
- making sure the schools are providing staff with adequate training on attendance
- holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

4.2 The Principal and Headteacher

The principal and headteacher 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 students
- monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

4.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance or the attendance officer (if not the Principal or Headteacher)

The designated senior leader / attendance officer is responsible for:

- leading actions to optimise attendance across the school, including:
 - benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement and offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
 - providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the /principal headteacher
 - evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
 - having an oversight of data analysis/monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
 - devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
 - building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
 - creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
 - working with outside agencies such as education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
 - advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The designated senior leader or the attendance officer responsible for attendance is Rory Vokes-Dudgeon and can be contacted via rory.vokes-dudgeon@abingdonhouseschool.co.uk.

4.4 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a twice daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9.15 am and 1.15 pm.

All teaching staff are responsible for reporting to the Head of School directly when a student does not attend a timetabled session as soon as is practicable, and before the start of the next lesson.

4.5 School Office staff

School Office staff:

- take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- transfer calls from parents/carers to the Head of School] in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

4.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- make sure their child attends every day on time
- call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30 am 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

4.7 Students

Students are expected to:

- attend school every day on time
- attend every timetabled session on time

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

Abingdon House School keeps an attendance register, and places all students onto this register.

Abingdon House School takes the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.

It records whether every student is:

- present
- attending an approved off-site educational activity
- absent
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register includes:

- 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.

The school also records:

- whether the absence is authorised or not
- the nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- the nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school keeps every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

[Students must arrive in school by 8.30 am on each school day.](#)

The register for the first session is taken at 08.45 am and is kept open until 9.15 am. The register for the second session is taken at 1.00 pm and is kept open until 1.30 pm.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent / carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (see also section 7).

Abingdon House School marks 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 asks for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The school does not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

5.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent / carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

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

The student'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.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student 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

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student expected to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school:

- calls the student's parent/carers by morning breaktime of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police
- 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
- call the parent/carers on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels for example, via half-termly written reports.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 before the absence. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see section 4 for more detail)
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision

6.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. Please look at your local authorities attendance requirements.

Penalty notices can be issued by a 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 student 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.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

Abingdon House promotes attendance by recognising excellent attendance levels as part of end of term awards.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 School monitoring of attendance

The school:

- monitors attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual student level
- identifies whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

The school compares attendance data to the national average, and shares this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school:

- analyses attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and uses this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- looks at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and develops strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school:

- provides regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders to facilitate discussions with students and families
- uses data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school:

- uses attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- holds regular meetings with the parents / carers of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- provides access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

9. Policy review

9.1 This policy is reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy is approved by the governing board.

10. Links with other policies

10.1 This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child missing education policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from (and given in the order of) [the DfE's current guidance on school attendance](#).

In any case of uncertainty about which code to use, the responsible staff member should always consult [the DfE's current guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Summary
Attending the school		
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration.
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration.
L	Late arrival before the register has closed	Student is absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed.
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Student is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority. A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead.
V	Attending an educational trip or visit	Student is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school.

		The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
W	Attending work experience	Student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded.
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	<p>Student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded. Schools must record the nature of the approved educational activity; examples are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending taster days at other schools • attending courses at college • attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school. <p>Students who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code.</p>
D	Dual registered at another school	With leave, the student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered.
Absent - leave of absence		
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a Medical / Dental appointment	Student has a medical or dental appointment, with the school's agreement in advance, and should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time

		necessary for the appointment. If the student is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.
JI	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	This interview must take place during the session for which it is recorded. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise. As study leave is unsupervised it must be recorded as absence.
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school	Schools can grant a leave of absence for a student not of compulsory school age to attend school part-time (eg where a pupil not of compulsory school age is attending school part-time or has otherwise been given leave of absence by the school). Where the student is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X.
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs in line with paragraphs 67 – 70 of <u>the DfE's current guidance on school attendance</u> .
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance	Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant

		background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
Absent - other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.
R	Religious Observation	The student is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves). As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related), not medical or dental appointments. Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.

E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Use this code if the suspended / excluded student's name is still entered in the admission register. This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.
Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	The pupil is unable to attend the school because a local authority has a duty to make access arrangements to enable the pupil's attendance at school and have failed to do so.
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Student is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available. Walking distance in relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available route.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Student is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those parts of the premises that remain in use.
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be marked with code Y4. This code may not be used for any planned closure such as weekends or holidays.

Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	<p>The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in police detention • remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing • detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	<p>The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), or • prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	<p>This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the student from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the student, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the student at school does not, in itself, mean the student has been prevented by unavoidable cause. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause.</p>
Absent - unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	<p>The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday. A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.</p>
N	Reason for absence not yet established	<p>Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner.</p>

		<p>Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N. The correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session. Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O.</p>
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	<p>Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.</p>
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	<p>Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session. Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.</p>
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	<p>To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the</p>

		school. Names must be added before the beginning of the first session on that day.
#	Planned whole school closure	<p>Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • days between terms • half terms • occasional days (for example, bank holidays) • weekends (where it is required by the management information system) • up to 5 non-educational days • use of the whole school as a polling station