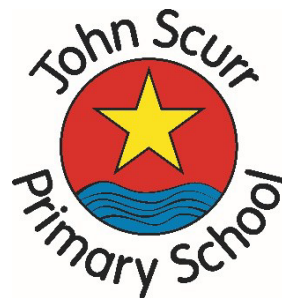


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Attendance policy

Approved by:	Helen Davies
Last reviewed on:	July 2026
Next review due by:	July 2029
Ratified by:	

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The name and contact details of the senior leaders responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school are: Helen Davies and Maria Lewington

The name and contact details of the school staff members pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis are: Syrihah Khatun (02077903647)

Introduction and Background

Tower Hamlets Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child/young person the best educational experience possible. 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. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

It seeks

to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued

Working closely with families and our partner agencies, including community organisations, to overcome any barriers to good attendance and provide support where required.

- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality and the relationship that poor attendance may have to safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. **It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances and it is the *headteacher*, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.**

1. Aims

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 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 ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

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](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

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

We work as part of Tower Hamlets attendance monitoring and support and their policy is included as an appendix to our policy. It is noted that both policies run together to ensure stakeholders are aware of the guiding principles and practices .

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfill expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Responsible for attendance: Helen Davies – AHT, Syriah Khatun - Attendance Assistant

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

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

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Helen Davies and can be contacted via helen.davies@johnscurr.towerhamlets.sch.uk

3.4 The Attendance Assistant

The Attendance Assistant and Family Support Worker are responsible for:

- First day call for EYFS – Yr 6 conducted by Syriah- Attendance Assistant– Arbor updated by midday.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9.00am every morning and 1.35 every afternoon.

The responsibility of teaching teams is to call absent families before 4pm to update them on **lost learning**. If phone lines are busy – please use mobile phones but ensure your phones are set to No Caller ID (please let SLT know if you are doing this regularly). If the parent does not pick up, then teachers must find the parent on the first day back to **update on lost learning**. This can be done after school.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system (Integris)
- If any calls are not answered, the office will call parents by 1pm and update Arbor
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance assistant first, then the AHT for attendance in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 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 8.30am 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

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon learning. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Using the correct code to acknowledge any other reason

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if 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 8.45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.50 am and will be kept open until 9.00am The register for the second session will be taken at 12.35 in EYFS and KS1 and 1.35 in KS2 and will be kept open for 5 minutes

Maintain daily SLT contact with classes and update daily narrative.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

4.2 Unplanned absence

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

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

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

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

4.3 Planned absence

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

Parents should inform the class teacher and the school admin team of any medical and dental appointments as soon as they have been confirmed. Parents provide the school admin team with proof of the appointment details that can be added to the pupil's medical tracker.

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

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- If a child is continually late, the class teacher will first meet with the parents/carers to find out possible reasons and inform them of the learning that the child is missing.
- If the lateness continues there will be a meeting with the family support worker or AHT with responsibility for attendance.

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/carer 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 call through to MAST or if extremely worried call 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/carer 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 the education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels with a termly 1:1 parent meeting for parents with children whose attendance is below 95%.

Letters home to parents when their child's attendance falls below 95%.

An invite to an APM (Attendance Panel Meeting) is given via a phone call to attend in person and discuss the reasons for absence with the Attendance Assistant, the Attendance Welfare Officer (AWO) and on some occasions the AHT for attendance. These meetings are held every half term, and are informed by Arbor and Insight data.

Teaching teams to call absent families before 4pm to update them on **lost learning**. If phone lines are busy – please use mobile phones but ensure your phones are set to No Caller ID (please let SLT know if you are doing this regularly). If the parent does not pick up, then teachers must find the parent on the first day back to **update on lost learning**. This can be done after school.

4.7 Deletion from Roll

Parents of pupils leaving Tower Hamlets Primary School other than at the end of Year 2/6 are required to complete a 'In-year Admission/School transfer' form which can be obtained from the school office or Pupil Services. This provides school and the LA with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. The school will need to complete a 'School History' section and sign the form before this can be submitted to the Local Authority. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and appropriately safeguard all of our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.

Every removal from the school register must be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for removal has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

5. Authorised and unauthorized absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil 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 pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as situations that are unavoidable or in the best interests of the child.

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 by completing an extended leave request form and, where possible, at least three weeks before the absence, accessible via the school office. Copies of the flight details are requested to add to the Extended Leave form to evidence departure and return dates.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Other possible "exceptional circumstances" where the headteacher may grant a term-time holiday.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, however is not exhaustive:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as an absence for the session
- Shopping trips
- Looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- Their own or family birthdays
- Holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher
- Day trips
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

5.2 Legal sanctions

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

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

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

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

- The number of unauthorized absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will promote and reward improved attendance, using a range of incentives, such as:

- Bowling Trip (best termly class attendance)
- 100% Attendance Celebration (Termly)
- Target Tuesdays
- Attendance display, with the classes ranked
- Hot Chocolate and Ice Lolly challenges for targeted days throughout the year
- Assembly focuses
- Wrap around care for Breakfast Club and Tea Time Club
- Walking bus
- Parent meetings promoting the reasons for good attendance

7. Attendance monitoring

As a school, we rigorously use attendance data on Arbor and Insight to identify patterns of poor attendance at individual and cohort level.

Cohorts identified will be monitored for patterns and trends. 1:1 meetings with class teachers will be priorities for these groups. Strategies for promoting attendance will be followed.

Children identified at an individual level are supported through a range of support mechanisms, depending on reasons for absence. These may include:

- Attendance Panel Meetings
- Early Help Support
- Meeting with Inclusion Lead
- School Nurse appointments
- Using the Walking Bus
- Breakfast and/or tea time club
- Where necessary, referrals to social care will be made, through MAST.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

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

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

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- 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:

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

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.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Attendance Panel Meetings will be held
- Referrals to Early Help Support
- Meeting with Inclusion Lead
- School Nurse appointments
- Where necessary, referrals to social care will be made, through MAST.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum of two years by AHT for Attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
K	Attending education provision	Pupil is attending an education provision provided by the LA
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C2	Temporary Part time timetable	Pupil has been granted a temporary part time timetable due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness - both physical and mental
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after 5 days)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
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Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Widespread disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency
Y3	Unable to attend due to partial school closure	Part of the school premises is closed due to exceptional circumstances
Y4	Unable to attend due to unexpected school closure	Whole school site is closed unexpectedly
Y6	Authorised absence led by Public Health	Pupil is absent in accordance with Public Health guidance
Q	Unable to attend due to access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school due to lack of access arrangements made by the LA
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Thresholds

Green- 97%- 100%	No risk of learning lost
Yellow- 95% - 96.9%	Risk of underachievement from lost learning
Amber- 93%- 94.9%	Serious Risk of underachievement from lost learning
Pink – 90%- 92.9%	Severe risk of underachievement from lost learning
Red- 0% - 89.9%	Extreme risk – potential court action

97% and above is attendance that is expected- we all ensure that this is maintained.

95%- 90% is below and 'of concern' attendance – meetings, letters and reminders this a Persistent Absenteeism trigger. In school action to support and track

90% or below – Attendance Panel with Ropna / Early Help

