



The Minster School Attendance Policy

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Last reviewed on:	Summer 2023	
Next review due by:	Summer 2025	

Succeeding Together

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord" Colossians 3:23

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Attendance Policy

Aims

The staff and governing body at The Minster School believe that maximum student attendance and punctuality are essential for all young people from Juniors through to post 16 to achieve their full potential. Excellent attendance sits at the heart of our school ethos of ‘Succeeding together’.

Succeeding Together

Enabling all members of our school community to work together, care for each other and strive to realise their potential in their studies and all other aspects of life.

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord.”

Colossians 3:23.

Our key aims link to our values of –

Wisdom – Ensuring every student has access to a full-time education, recognising that there is a clear link between excellent attendance, motivation, and realising full potential.

Optimism – Striving to promote an excellent rate of attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.

Resilience – Working in partnership between school, students, parents and carers and other professionals to remove barriers negatively impacting a child’s school attendance.

Kindness – Understanding that students, parents, or carers sometimes need support and that acting early to address absence, positively changes attendance habits.

Service – Challenging and supporting parents or carers to perform their legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory age attend regularly.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) attendance guide for schools [Working together to improve school attendance](#) 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 \(Student Registration\) \(England\) 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.

How the school records attendance

Attendance Register

- We keep an electronic attendance register of every student on roll. Staff use this system to mark attendance accurately to every lesson throughout the school day, with an expectation that registers are completed within the first ten minutes of every lesson throughout the day.

All attendance registers will mark, whether every student is:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (See appendix I for the DfE attendance codes)

The junior school gates open at 8.40 and any student arriving after 8.55 will be recorded as late. Any junior student arriving after 8.55 should report to reception.

The secondary school opens at 8.30. Any student arriving after 8.47 will be recorded as late. When arriving late after the gate has closed in the secondary school students will be subject to a late gate sanction. The first late is recorded without a sanction; procedures outlined in the [Positive Student Management Policy](#) will be followed for subsequent lates.

Post 16 students arriving after 8.47 proceed to main reception to sign in and utilise the signing in devices located here. Post 16 students must sign in when entering the building and out if leaving before the end of the school day.

When students arrive after the late gate has closed in the secondary school, students report to the Main reception. If the registers have closed (9.30am) students will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, unless it is a planned absence as outlined below.

The register for the AM session will commence at 08.50 and will be kept open until 09.30. The register for the PM session will commence at 12.30 and will be kept open until the end of period 4.

Staff must not overwrite the codes inserted into a register and must use only one of three codes:

- / present
- N absent
- L late (with the number of minutes late recorded)

The present code is used when students arrive late for a lesson with a note from another member of staff (e.g. Head of Year) explaining their lateness. A present code is also used when a bus arrives late, causing a student to be late for a lesson.

Lateness, punctuality and internal truancy

We expect all students to be punctual and attend all lessons.

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

We expect all students to be punctual and attend all lessons. Students in years 7 to 11 who are late to lessons may be sanctioned in line with the behaviour policy. Where students have internally truanted, the absence will be marked as unauthorised, parents contacted and sanctions will apply for those in years 7 to 11.

Planned Absence

Where possible, please make dental and medical appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the amount of school time missed should be kept to a minimum. Medical absences can be reported in advance via

Juniors and secondary students –

- 01636 817366 or via email attendance@minster.notts.sch.uk by 8.30 or as soon as practically possible.

For post 16 students –

- 01636 817333 or via email to r.toms@minster.notts.sch.uk

Please attach any hospital letters or appointment cards to enable the authorising of these absences. Any other type of term-time absence must be applied for as far in advance as possible of the requested absence as outline below.

Unplanned Absence

The attendance officer should be notified of unplanned absences by contacting the student absence line.

For Juniors and secondary students –

- 01636 817366 or via email attendance@minster.notts.sch.uk by 8.30 or as soon as practically possible.

For post 16 students –

- 01636 817333 or via email to r.toms@minster.notts.sch.uk

Parents and carers must account for each day of absence by contacting school.

When students are absent from school, with no reason provided for this absence, the Attendance Officer will contact home to discover why that student is absent. A first day calling text message will be sent to the parent or carer, please ensure all contact details are kept up to date, please inform any changes to: office@minster.notts.sch.uk.

We expect our students to come to school if they have minor illnesses such as a headache, cold, sore throat, or cough. When a student has an illness where they are not well enough to be in school, we will mark the absence as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Medical evidence may be requested to authorise any absences and will be needed if your

child has an attendance below 95% or has 3 days of unauthorised absence in a 6-week period. This can be in the form of a doctor's note, medical note or appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

If we are not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents and carers will be notified of this in advance.

Attendance Monitoring

Daily Monitoring

The attendance officers' monitor student's attendance on a daily basis. A student's parent or carer is expected to contact the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to illness. ***The parent or carer is expected to call each morning their child is absent.***

If the student absence continues for three consecutive days, the school will contact the parent or carer of the student to discuss the reason.

Persistent Absence and Monitoring

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee when their attendance drops to 90% or less **regardless of the reason**. Absence at this level triggers targeted support and attendance monitoring to those students either at risk of or those who are classified as a persistently absent student. Parents and carers will be expected to engage with support.

Following up on absence

Every student is expected to attend school unless they have an adjusted provision. Where students don't attend, we will -

- Contact parents and carers to establish the reason why. This can be by a range of strategies such as first day texting, phone calls and home visits.
- Ensure safeguarding action is taken where necessary which may involve the police or social care.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct code to apply to the absence.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

Term-time absence Requests

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Where families are service personnel
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- Other compassionate circumstances that can be confidentially shared with us.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant context behind the request. The letter to the headteacher must specifically state what the exceptional circumstances are.

To request a leave of absence please contact the attendance officer.

Juniors and Secondary school- attendance@minster.notts.sch.uk

Post 16 attendance officer - r.toms@minster.notts.sch.uk

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 student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' 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
- Family bereavement
- Situations where the academy authorises absence, e.g., study leave, work experience, interviews and special activities such as theatre/sporting/musical performance.
- Fixed term exclusions

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their student from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. (Does not apply at post 16)

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

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

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- 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.

Roles and Responsibilities in Supporting Good Attendance.

We have several strategies to support good attendance.

- Weekly attendance data is shared with tutors.
- The sharing of tutor group attendance during celebration assemblies.
- The awarding of WORKS points for those who have achieved attendance of 95% or above half termly.
- Attendance intervention through a range of support strategies.

Good attendance benefits a student. In line with our motto *Succeeding Together* this section outlines the role of different stakeholders in supporting the best attendance possible.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the school has a whole school attendance policy in place.
- Receive annual reports from the Assistant Headteacher and Headteacher in respect of attendance data and trends.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the whole school policy.

The headteacher:

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

The assistant headteacher will:

- Oversee the Attendance policy.
- Set annual targets for attendance.
- Inform governors of attendance data through Governor reports.
- Report to Senior leaders every half term.

Students will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the school day.
- Tell a member of staff about any problem which is making it hard for them to attend school regularly.

Parents/carers will:

- Encourage their children to attend school every day and on time in accordance with the signed home/school agreement.
- Ensure that they contact the school before the start of the school day whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Ensure that their child arrives in school fully prepared for the school day.
- Provide the school with up-to-date home, work, and emergency contact numbers.
- Send a communication stating the reasons for and duration of all unauthorised absence upon the child's return.
- Send a letter requesting absence in exceptional circumstances to the Head Teacher who will then inform you of the decision.

Tutors/subject teachers will:

- Ensure that registers are completed accurately and on time at the start of each session.
- Report any concerns relating to attendance to their Year Leader/Key Stage Leader.
- Contact parents where concerns are identified.

The Year Leaders will:

- Monitor attendance and punctuality and where concerns are identified, parents contacted.
- Promote and reward excellent attendance by students.
- Use appropriate sanctions to address unexplained absence. For example, Pastoral detention, referral to Key stage leader, or contact home.
- Meet with the attendance officer to review attendance for year group.
- When an individual pupil's attendance level falls below 90% in any term without good reason, contact parents/carers and prepare the relevant fine documentation.

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Year Leader, key stage leader and assistant headteacher.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

Appendix A – Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed
Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody

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

