

Our Lady Queen of Peace

Catholic High School



Attendance Policy

Date of Policy	Sept 2026
Date of Review	Sept 2027

Mission Statement

In Christ We Grow

Striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving.

**‘I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit’
[John 15: 5]**

The Importance of good attendance

- Attendance has a direct correlation with attainment. Students who attend well, for at least 97% of the time, achieve significantly better grades than their peers with persistent absence
- High levels of attendance allow students to make better progress socially, learn to work with others, supports positive mental health and ensures they are better prepared for further education, training and employment
- Students with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, 3 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage contributing to their individual academic success
- It is vital that every student attends school on time, every day unless there is an unavoidable reason for a student to be absent
- Every absence or late arrival disrupts teaching and learning
- Regular absence will have a detrimental effect on the progress of each student, their GCSE outcomes and can impact negatively on a student's mental health

100%	Excellent attendance. No impact on progress.
97- 99%	Good attendance. Minimal impact on progress.
91- 96%	Room for improvement. Gaps in knowledge and understanding will impact on progress.
Below 90%	‘Persistently Absent’. Serious cause for concern. Equates to missing half a year’s education during the course of Years 7-11. Noticeable impact on progress. Grades achieved are significantly lower than peers who attend well.
Below 80%	‘Persistently Absent’. Acute cause for concern. Equates to missing a full year of education during the course of Years 7-11. Catastrophic impact on progress.

Current Requirements:

- Every child should have a minimum attendance of 97% or higher
- All students should strive to achieve 100% if they can
- Persistent absence is defined as any child whose cumulative attendance is 90% or below at any point during the academic year
- Severe absence refers to students whose attendance is below 50%

Legal Framework

This Attendance Policy has due regard to, and is implemented in accordance with, all relevant legislation, statutory guidance and Department for Education (DfE) guidance applicable to schools in England, including, but not limited to:

- **Education Act 1996**, including the statutory duties relating to school attendance and parental responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable education.
- **Equality Act 2010**, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments and to ensure that attendance procedures do not unlawfully discriminate against pupils with protected characteristics.
- **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**, which came into force on 19 August 2024 and replaced the previous pupil registration regulations. These Regulations set out requirements relating to admission and attendance registers, attendance codes and the recording of pupil attendance and absence.
- **Department for Education (DfE), Working together to improve school attendance: statutory guidance for maintained schools, academy trusts, independent schools and local authorities (August 2024, as amended)**. This is statutory guidance and schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities must have regard to it. The guidance sets out expectations for promoting regular attendance, identifying and responding to barriers to attendance, supporting pupils and families, and using legal interventions where appropriate. The guidance was last updated by the DfE on 9 July 2026.
- **Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2025**, which remains the statutory guidance in force until 31 August 2026. **KCSIE 2026** will come into force on 1 September 2026 and will replace the 2025 version. This policy will therefore be read in conjunction with the version of KCSIE in force at the relevant time.
- **Department for Education, Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities (2016)**, including expectations relating to children who are not receiving suitable education and the identification and referral of children missing from education.
- **Department for Education, Providing remote education: guidance for schools**, where applicable, in relation to the provision of education when pupils are unable to attend school.
- **Department for Education, Share your daily school attendance data**, which sets out the requirements and arrangements for schools to provide attendance information to the DfE. From the beginning of the 2024/25 academic year, schools have been required to provide specified attendance information to the DfE on request, with daily attendance data supporting earlier identification of attendance concerns.

- Any other statutory guidance, regulations, codes of practice or DfE guidance relevant to school attendance, safeguarding, children missing education, SEND, equality, children with social workers and pupils with medical or other additional needs.

This policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance and DfE requirements.

Related School Policies and Procedures

This Attendance Policy should be read alongside the school's other relevant policies and procedures, including:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education procedures, where applicable
- Exclusions/Suspensions Policy
- Online Safety Policy, where relevant to attendance and safeguarding
- Pastoral, Mental Health and Wellbeing procedures, where applicable

Where attendance concerns indicate a safeguarding risk, the school's safeguarding procedures will take precedence and concerns will be addressed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

DfE Expectations and Principles

The Department for Education makes clear that **attendance is everyone's responsibility**. Schools are expected to establish effective systems and processes for promoting regular attendance, identifying attendance concerns at an early stage, understanding the barriers preventing individual students from attending, and providing appropriate support to improve attendance.

Aims

The school aims to:

- **Promote regular and punctual attendance as a shared priority**, embedding high expectations for attendance within the school's vision, values, ethos, curriculum and day-to-day life.
- **Ensure that attendance is everyone's responsibility**, with clear and consistent expectations for students, parents/carers, staff, governors and trustees, and a consistent whole-school approach to promoting and improving attendance.

- **Provide an inclusive, supportive and ambitious education** that enables every student to achieve their potential and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- **Build positive relationships with students and families**, promoting open, respectful and consistent communication between home and school and ensuring that parents/carers understand the importance of regular attendance and how they can support it.
- **Create a culture in which students feel valued, safe and able to attend**, recognising and addressing the barriers that may affect attendance, including those relating to SEND, disability, medical needs, mental health and wellbeing, safeguarding, disadvantage, caring responsibilities, bullying, behaviour and other individual circumstances.
- **Ensure fairness, understanding and appropriate support**, making reasonable adjustments where required and ensuring that attendance procedures are applied consistently, proportionately and without discrimination.
- **Identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity**, using accurate and timely attendance and punctuality data to monitor patterns, identify individual students and cohorts who may need support, analyse trends, set appropriate targets and evaluate the impact of interventions.
- **Operate an effective and robust attendance management system**, ensuring that attendance is accurately recorded in accordance with statutory requirements, concerns are followed up promptly, and safeguarding issues associated with absence are identified and acted upon.
- **Provide appropriate, proportionate and individualised support** to remove barriers to attendance, working collaboratively with students, parents/carers, the local authority and other relevant agencies and professionals where additional or specialist support is required.
- **Recognise and celebrate good attendance and punctuality**, in accordance with the school's community principles and Behaviour and Rewards Policy, while ensuring that recognition is inclusive and does not disadvantage students whose attendance is affected by disability, medical needs or other circumstances protected by law.
- **Ensure effective leadership and accountability for attendance**, including a designated senior leader with responsibility for attendance, appropriate resources and funding, regular staff training, and clear roles and responsibilities across the school.
- **Integrate attendance into wider school improvement strategies**, including attainment, behaviour, anti-bullying, safeguarding, SEND, support for students with medical conditions or disabilities, mental health and wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged students.
- **Work collaboratively with external partners**, including the local authority, other schools, relevant agencies and the appropriate attendance and legal services, in accordance with statutory requirements and DfE guidance.

- **Use formal attendance interventions and legal measures appropriately**, where support has not secured improvement, where appropriate support has not been engaged with, or where legal intervention is otherwise necessary. This may include statutory attendance interventions and, where the legal threshold is met and prosecution is considered appropriate, action under **section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996**.
- **Apply the statutory framework for leave of absence consistently**, normally declining applications for leave during term time unless the circumstances meet the relevant statutory requirements or constitute exceptional circumstances, as applicable.
- **Continuously review and improve attendance practice**, using attendance data, student and parent/carer feedback, staff insight and the latest legislation and DfE guidance to ensure that the school's approach remains effective, inclusive and focused on improving outcomes for all students.

Role of the Governing Body

The governing body recognises that regular school attendance is fundamental to students' educational achievement, safeguarding, wellbeing and wider development.

In accordance with DfE expectations, the governing body/trust board will:

- recognise the importance of attendance and promote high expectations for attendance and punctuality across the school's ethos and policies
- ensure that school leaders understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities relating to attendance
- provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders
- regularly review attendance information and trends, including the attendance of specific students and groups of students
- consider whether appropriate action is being taken to improve attendance and address barriers
- ensure that attendance policies, procedures and systems are reviewed regularly
- ensure that staff receive appropriate training and support to fulfil their attendance responsibilities
- have regard to the DfE's statutory guidance on improving school attendance.

Our Approach to Attendance

The school recognises that attendance is closely connected to the quality of education, behaviour, safeguarding, SEND provision, pastoral support, mental health and wellbeing, and the wider school experience.

The school therefore takes a *'support-first, relationship-based approach'* to attendance. We recognise that poor attendance is often a symptom of underlying barriers rather than simply a choice made by a student or family.

Our approach is based on:

1. **Prevention** – establishing positive relationships, clear expectations and an inclusive school environment that encourages students to attend regularly.
2. **Early identification** – using accurate and timely attendance data to identify emerging patterns of absence or lateness.
3. **Understanding barriers** – working with students and parents/carers to understand the reasons for absence and identify what is preventing regular attendance.
4. **Targeted support** – putting appropriate, proportionate and individualised support in place, involving other professionals where necessary.
5. **Sustained improvement** – monitoring the impact of support and adjusting provision where required.
6. **Formal intervention** – where support is not successful, is not engaged with, or is not appropriate, considering formal attendance interventions in accordance with statutory guidance and the circumstances of the case.

The school will work in partnership with students and parents/carers wherever possible. We will seek to build strong, respectful and trusting relationships so that concerns can be identified early and addressed constructively.

The school also recognises the positive impact that a broad, ambitious and engaging curriculum, enrichment opportunities, extracurricular activities, positive behaviour approaches, strong pastoral care and an inclusive school community can have on attendance.

Attendance will therefore be considered as part of the school's wider commitment to achievement, inclusion, safeguarding, wellbeing and positive outcomes for every student.

Working Together – How Our Lady Queen of Peace will adhere to the DfE Vision

EXPECT

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

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

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

FACILITATE SUPPORT

- Remove barriers in school and help students and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school.
- This might include early help or a 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 a parenting 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 or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education.

Expectations of students and parents

Parents/Carers should:

- Fulfill their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- Familiarise themselves with the Attendance Policy
- Ensure that the school has up-to-date contact information for themselves and emergency contacts
- Contact school on first day of absence
- Maintain DAILY contact with school for continued absence via Class Charts, email or telephone
- Communicate with school and not directly with their child if their child needs to leave school during the day for any reason.
- Contact school early where problems with attendance are emerging
- Support the school in intervention and action plans, including attendance meetings as required
- Participate in Attendance Parenting Contracts.
- Not book a holiday during term time. The Headteacher can no longer authorise leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances include death in the family, attachment to armed forces and critical illness. Parents who remove their child from school for a holiday will receive a fixed penalty notice.

Students must:

- Attend regularly and punctually to all lessons, including registration. The bell rings at 08:25 for the morning session

- Meet or exceed the school's minimum individual attendance requirement of 97%
- Participate fully when action plans are put into place
- Report to the Attendance team if leaving or arriving at any time during the school day

Name and Contact Information for staff with responsibility for attendance:

- Our Attendance Improvement Worker is Mrs B. Hall: bhall@olqp.lancs.sch.uk
- Our Attendance Officer (day to day) is Mrs L Connor: l.connor@olqp.lancs.sch.uk
- Our Family Support Worker is Ms L. Walton l.walton@olqp.lancs.sch.uk
- The school phone number is: 01695 725635

Where students need more detailed support on attendance

The following staff may be involved: Heads of Year and Assistant Heads of Year:

Year Group	Head of Year	Assistant Head of Year
7	R Lelyveld	M Evans
8	K Scott	J Nelson
9	O Jones	S Calvignac
10	K Leicester	C Snead
11	K Knight	E Hewitt

School Day and Registration

- The start of the school day is **8.30am**. The bell rings at 8.25am to announce the start of the morning session
- Morning registration takes place in form-time (8.30- 9am)
- Afternoon registration takes place in Lesson 4 (in the first 10 minutes)
- The end of the school day is **3pm**
- The register closes at 9am in the morning and 12.50 in the afternoon

Timings of the School Day

	Timings
Form Time (AM mark)	08:30 - 09:00
Period 1	09:00 - 10:00
Period 2	10:00 - 11:00
Break	11:00 - 11:20
Period 3	11:20 - 12:20
Period 4 (PM mark)	12:20 - 13:20
Lunch	13:20 - 14:00
Period 5	14:00 - 15:00

Punctuality

- Being on time for school and for lessons is an important signal that shows a student is ready and willing to engage in their learning.
- Lateness to school and lessons is not acceptable and has a detrimental effect on progress. Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school.
- Students who are late will be given a detention in their social time

Lateness to school will incur a sanction as follows:

- after 8.30am –lunch time detention
- Failure to attend the above detention will result in an after-school detention
- after 8.50am - immediate after-school detention the same day.
- Persistent lateness will incur further sanctions including a Punctuality Report and contact with parents/carers.
- Severe lateness can contribute to prosecution for poor attendance.
- Lateness to lessons will be recorded on ClassCharts and will incur detentions.
- The data is reviewed regularly by Pastoral staff who identify patterns and trends

Every Minute Counts:

Lateness = Lost Learning (figures below are calculated over the school year)

- 5 mins late each day 3 days lost
- 10 mins late each day 6.5 days lost
- 15 mins late each day 10 days lost
- 20 mins late each day 13 days lost
- 30 mins late each day 19 days lost

Promoting good attendance and punctuality

- Students achieve positive ClassCharts points for Attendance each lesson: Be here, Be on time, Be ready
- Students also achieve ClassCharts points for attending school each day
- Form attendance is displayed in form rooms each week
- Regular attendance competitions are held, including rewards for 100% attendance

Roles and responsibilities of all staff:

All school staff will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and a safe learning environment.
- Be aware of factors that can contribute to poor attendance and punctuality
- Adhere to the procedures in place within school to promote good attendance
- Promote the link between attendance and educational attainment to students and parents
- Complete attendance registers in accordance with the legislation and under the direction of the head teacher
- Discuss attendance concerns at an early stage with children and parents
- Raise any concerns about attendance with the attendance lead and/or Headteacher

Specific Roles:

Role	Name of Staff Member	Responsibility
Headteacher	Mrs M. Henshaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead on giving attendance a high profile.• Ensure that the policy is implemented.• Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality in the school and the wider community.• Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school confirms to statutory requirements regarding attendance. • Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision. • Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process. • Provide regular reports to the governing body on school attendance, including persistent absence and vulnerable groups.
Heads of Year/ Assistant Heads of Year	See table above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate regularly with parents re: their child's attendance • Monitor the attendance and punctuality of their year group and intervene in line with the attendance intervention framework – directing FT to intervene where necessary and monitoring this • Support and supervise late sanctions (DETENTION). • Contact and meet with parents where attendance/punctuality is a concern • Place students on report where absence/lateness persists
Form Tutors	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the attendance and punctuality of the students in their form and intervene in line with the attendance intervention framework in liaison with the Head of Year • Liaise directly with the Attendance Officer when a learner advises of an impending absence or produces a note to cover an absence • Stress the importance of attendance in direct correlation to achievement • Ensure the register is marked promptly and accurately • Statutory registers close at 09.00am for the morning session and 12.50 for the afternoon session each day. The tutor is responsible for late marks during the teaching/registration period. After this the child will have an unauthorised absence for the relevant session unless you provide a legitimate reason for the absence. Individual class registers close 10 minutes after the start of the session. In the morning, if your child arrives after 08:50 they are late and this will be recorded accordingly – see <i>Punctuality</i> below • Use rewards and sanctions.

Teaching Staff	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the register is marked promptly and accurately for every session. • Statutory registers close at 12.40 for the afternoon session each day • Registers close 10 minutes after the commencement of each session. Ensure students arriving to lessons late are recorded correctly – see <i>Punctuality</i> below; refer to attendance office if in doubt. • Keep register up to date throughout the lesson • Note any concerns in student attendance pattern and inform Form Tutor and Head of Year/ AHoy • Inform attendance team of any student who does not arrive to class who has previously been marked present.
Associate Staff	Attendance Team: Mrs Leonnie Connor Attendance Officer: Mrs B Hall Mrs L Walton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively manage the day-to-day administration of attendance registers • Operate a robust absence management and intervention process including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ managing the first day absence contact system ◦ following up unexplained absences ◦ generating and circulating effective reports to facilitate early and timely intervention ◦ analysing reporting data and acting upon it ◦ facilitating Attendance Panel Meetings ◦ keeping appropriate records ◦ working closely with the pastoral team, partner schools, or outside agencies, the LA and the Court Officer • Conduct home visits • Assist with Parenting Contracts • Intervene with and assist families in relation to attendance/punctuality concerns • Work in partnership with external agencies, including the police, and in particular the School Nurse • Document and collate evidence for referrals to the LA and Court Officer in liaison with the SLT Lead for Attendance • Record late arrivals after registers close at 9.00 and 14.15 daily • Maintain up to date fire registers.

The school's day to day processes for managing attendance:

First Day of Absence Contact System

- Parents have a responsibility to contact the school on the first day of absence to explain the reason for the absence.
- Parents will maintain DAILY communication with the school should the absence continue.
- Parents can communicate via the Class Charts app, email or telephone. If school should text to ask where your child is, it is free to reply.
- Where parents have concerns about their child's attendance, they should seek immediate advice and support from school.
- If a child is absent and school has not heard from the parent, the parent will be contacted on the first day of absence to find out the reason and when the child is expected to return
- If the school is unable to contact a parent, then emergency contacts will be approached and if necessary a home visit may take place. These may be unannounced

How the school promotes good attendance

- The school office will contact parents by either phone call or text if a student is absent and the school office has not been informed of the absence.
- We work with primary schools to identify poor attenders, before the child enters school in Year 7
- All new parents are given information outlining that the school expectations with regard to attendance.
- There is a series of letter proformas we issue in relation to attendance matters which will be sent to parent/ carers when there are concerns regarding attendance.
- Our school has:
 - A member of the Senior Leadership Team who oversees the Attendance procedures and policy.
 - A member of the Attendance team who monitors all attendance data on the school's Management Information System, which is used for data analysis, and attendance reports.
 - An Attendance improvement Officer who monitors complex cases and students with persistent absence
- The school works very closely with the Attendance Advisory Service and is visited by an officer on a regular basis. Parents who have not followed the school's attendance guide are referred to the Attendance Advisory Officer (AAO) if attendance continues to be poor.

- The school sends letters to parents and speaks to children where attendance has improved.
- ClassCharts reports daily to parents on attendance
- The end of year reports report on attendance and punctuality.
- The designated Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance works closely with parents, the LA and the child to improve poor performance, in line with LA and national policies.
- Daily attendance figures for year groups and individual students are available in ClassCharts
- Learning Managers raise the profile of attendance in assemblies
- Students are rewarded for 100% attendance
- Form groups are also rewarded for the best weekly attendance

Monitoring and analysing absence

The SLT Attendance Lead will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Year groups preparing for exams.
- Individual students.
- Demographic groups, e.g. students from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of students, e.g. students with SEND, LAC and students eligible for FSM.
- Students at risk of PA.

The SLT Attendance Lead will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The SLT Attendance Lead will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of students and to implement attendance procedures. The Assistant Headteacher will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

Use of Systems and Strategies

Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic High School uses electronic systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality at both individual and whole school level. We analyse data, patterns and trends to develop future action planning and target setting.

Types of absence

- Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers.
- As a school, we will always work with parents (and other agencies, as appropriate) to understand the reasons underlying absence.

Authorised absences

- Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.
- Medical appointments are only permitted for half a day

Unauthorised absences

- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable.
- If school has followed its attendance procedures and a student continues to have unauthorised absences, the school may request legal interventions from the School Attendance Legal Team.
- Examples of unauthorised absences are:
 - Truancy for the whole day, part of the day or individual lessons
 - Absence which is condoned by the family without a valid reason
 - Unexplained absence
 - School refusal
 - Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
 - Children who arrive at school after the register has closed.
 - Days off for shopping, birthdays or looking after other children.
 - Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed by the head teacher.
 - Days that exceed the amount of leave agreed by the Headteacher.

- Any holiday absence or extended leave taken during term time from the school (this incurs a Fixed Penalty Notice)
- Continued persistent late arrival to school after other sanctions have been implemented – see above
- It is the school's decision whether or not to authorise any absence and we may request medical evidence before authorising absence for illness, particularly if a student has below target attendance or is absent for a period of 5 days or more.
- It is the Headteacher's responsibility or other designated person to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Hence, if there is any ambiguity relating to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents before an absence is authorised. This may be in the form of a prescription, appointment card or similar. Parents should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence.
- Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for other reasons. If a child is reluctant to attend school it is best to speak to school as soon as possible to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up the absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. As a school, we will always work with parents (and external agencies as appropriate) to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided

Home Visits

- Attendance improvement staff will attend the home of students who are persistently or severely absent in order to support families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Home visits may also take place if no reason for absence has been provided and school are concerned about the safety of a child.
- If no contact is made to explain a child's absence and there is no sign of the child at home then a police welfare check will be requested.

Other Strategies

- The school will work with a family to identify barriers and will work with the family to remove them
- The schools will work sensitively to consider some of the reasons for absence and will work to make the school a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties
- The school will refer to external agencies as appropriate
- The school will offer specific support with attendance or a whole family plan
- The school may give consideration for additional SEND support
- The school may offer an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school

- If all avenues of support have been exhausted and severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. The school will work to safeguard the child and move to conduct a full children's social care assessment.

Persistent Absence

- A student is classed as a persistent absentee when their attendance is 90% or less at any point during the academic year.
- Any absence, whether authorised or unauthorised, is included in the figures. Students who are identified as persistent absentees will be supported and challenged through the school's systems for addressing persistent absence.
- From February 2004, the law gives powers to the school and other designated bodies to request Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecution when a parent is considered able but unwilling to ensure their child's attendance at school.
- When the school deems this appropriate, usually as a last resort, a fixed penalty or court summons may be issued to each parent/carer.
- Persistent absence figures have to be sent electronically to the Local Authority every half term.

Children Missing Education (CME)

- School will notify Lancashire's Children Missing Education Team when students have missed 10 consecutive school days without permission (or sooner if school are aware that the student is not going to return e.g. moved out of area) via the CME referral form.
- School will complete a CME removal from roll form and/or provide Lancashire (offroll@lancashire.gov.uk) with the relevant details where a student has been removed from roll and a start at a new school has been confirmed or where the CME Team has advised School that removal from roll is authorised.

Holidays and Extended Leave during Term Time

- The school has set a target of 97% attendance for every child of school age. If a child is absent from school for a week's holiday which includes 5 school days, then their percentage attendance will be 97.4% and therefore in danger of dropping below target.
- By law, maintained schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their education and progress as much as any other absence. If leave is being requested for a holiday or extended leave abroad, approval should be obtained from the head teacher before making any bookings.

Leave of absence in term time **will not** be granted unless:

- a request for leave has been made in advance by a parent with whom the student normally resides **and**

- the head teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the request.

Due to the need to evidence exceptional circumstances, parents are advised to provide school with any relevant information regarding their request at the point of application if they believe the circumstances are exceptional.

In considering the request school will also consider other factors such as:

- The timing of the requested leave, e.g. when a student is just starting at school or during assessment periods, such as SATs.
- A student's attendance record already includes unauthorised absence.
- Attendance is already a concern, or could become a concern, as a result of taking leave.
- Other periods of leave which the student may have had, either during the current or previous academic year.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised.

If a holiday/extended leave is taken, then the school will apply for an automatic Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

The school may not authorise absence for illness for 5 days or more without medical evidence.

Religious absence

- School will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, e.g., Eid, and this will be marked as code R in the register.
- The day authorised will be that set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member.
- Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if the head teacher agrees that exceptional circumstances apply; this would be marked in the register as code C.

Participation in sporting events

- Parents can request leave of absence for their child to take part in regional, national and international sporting events. However, as always, granting leave is at the head teacher's discretion and she/he will need to discuss with you the length and frequency of the absence(s) requested and how learning will continue if absence occurs, e.g., the sports club or association providing an approved education tutor.
- Leave for a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school can be marked in the register as code P.

- Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late in order to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headteacher and is unlikely to be approved if it occurs regularly.

Participation in performances (e.g., theatre, television, modelling)

- Parents of a child performer can request leave from school for their child to take part in a performance.
- A local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance.
- Before a licence is granted, school will be consulted and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the leave will not have a negative effect on the child's education.
- Where the licence specifies the dates that the child is to be away from school, the Headteacher should authorise those days. However, where the licence does not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave request.
- Any absence authorised for the child to take part in a performance will be recorded as code C.
- Parents wishing to apply for a performance licence should go the Lancashire County Council Child performance licences webpage.

Attendance concerns

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any attendance problems together; this is nearly always successful. However, if concerns persist, school will use the following procedures and interventions, as required, to support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality:

- Telephone calls and/or letters to make parents aware of school's concern about their child's attendance.
- Invitation to meetings to discuss concerns with our attendance lead and/or head teacher.
- Parenting contracts to identify barriers to regular attendance, ways to overcome these and agree targets for improvement.
- Incentive and reward schemes for individual students, if appropriate.
- The Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and/or referral to other agencies and services, including School Nurses and Primary Mental Health Workers, if appropriate.
- For unauthorised absences, request legal interventions by the local authority, such as penalty notices, prosecution or other attendance-related court orders.

At any stage, we may seek advice from our School Attendance Consultant.

Students with medical needs who have difficulty attending school

- Government guidance on supporting students at school with medical conditions emphasises the role of governing bodies in ensuring that students with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other students.
- A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these students, whether their condition is short or long term.
- The school will work hard to
 - Understand the individual needs of the student and the family
 - To put in place in-school support and work with external agencies as needed
 - Regularly review and update the support
- School will work with parents and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be in the form of specific support or resources used within school or by sourcing appropriate provision at another establishment. When education is to be provided at an alternative location, this should always be done via the use of a direction
- When a student has been absent from school for an extended period, the Headteacher, the class teacher and other support services will work with the family to ensure that a smooth reintegration is achieved.

Equality Act 2010

The school recognises that students with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support students who find attending school difficult.

The school will:

- consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of students struggling to attend school. These may include uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements
- make formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where the student has a disability
- agree adjustments as needed regularly review them with the student and their parents
- ensure pastoral care is in place and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school is appropriate
- consider enabling a student to have a reduced timetable.
- ensure a student can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- implement a system whereby students can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- consider temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Implement phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- run small group work or on-to-one lessons.

- make a sickness return to the LA if a student will miss 15+ days
- refer to the school nurse / mental health support as needed
- inform the LA where the attendance of a student with an EHCP falls
- review and amend the EHCP in collaboration with the LA

Students refusing to attend school

- At Our Lady Queen of Peace, we believe that every child has a right to a full-time education, and we would not accept "school refusal" as a reason for non-attendance.
- In such cases, we will work with parents to identify the reasons why a child may be reluctant to attend school. We may with consent, make referrals to external partners such as the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, Primary Mental Health Workers, etc, as appropriate to try to ensure the correct support is secured for the child and their family.
- Student absence is followed up in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and KCSIE 2026

Managing External Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of students, and understand the importance of continuity in each student's learning.

Any student with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the student services and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher is notified, and the attendance team will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the student not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

Managing Internal Truancy

In order to manage internal and external truancy the school does the following:

- Ensures there is a visible and consistent corridor presence from school leaders, particularly at moments of changeover.
- Delivers consequences for all students involved.
- Makes sure there is a centralised, simple and quick system using ClassCharts for teachers to use to track the problem.
- Encourages every staff member to play their role in recording and tracking incidents, as well as minimising the number of students leaving a lesson by allowing them to leave for urgent reasons only.
- Involves students' families as soon as there is an instance of truancy.
- Ensures there is a place, where students can go if there is a genuine issue that they need support with or allows teachers to request pastoral support via ClassCharts.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent student will inform the attendance team immediately
- Student Services will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
- A search will be made for the missing child, with an email sent to all staff
- Once the above has been exhausted parents will be contacted
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - The library
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted
- If the student has not been found after 20 minutes, then the parents of the student will be notified
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the student, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted
- The attendance team will complete CPOMS, describing all circumstances leading up to the student going missing
- If the absent student has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed after the carer has been notified and if the child has not been located

- When the student has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents will be informed immediately when the student has been located

The appropriate Pastoral staff member will take the appropriate action to ensure that students understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

Policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

Part-time Timetables

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for the school to provide a student of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. A part-time timetable will not be used to manage a student's behaviour.

A part-time timetable will:

- Have the agreement of both the school and the parent the student normally lives with.
- Have a clear ambition and be part of the student's wider support, health care or reintegration plan.
- Have regular review dates which include the student and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.
- Have a proposed end date that takes into account the circumstances of the student, after which the student is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process.
- In some limited cases, a student with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period.

Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a student is unable to attend because:

- There is a lack of access arrangements.
- Transport normally provided is not available and the school is not within walking distance.
- There is widespread disruption to travel.
- Part of the school premises is closed, and the student cannot be practicably accommodated.
- The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly.
- The student is in criminal justice detention.
- Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited.
- Any other avoidable cause makes attendance impossible.

The use of the seven 'Y' codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes. Code Q will be used in circumstances where there are a lack of access arrangements.

The point at which legal interventions will be requested

Use of the Fixed Penalty Notice

In accordance with the Lancashire code of conduct, the school may request that the local authority issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence. This includes:

- Leave of absence which is taken without a prior request being made.
- Leave taken after a request has been declined.
- Days taken in excess of an agreed period of leave, without good reason.
- Other unauthorised absence that meets the required threshold, including sessions marked as late after the register has closed (code U).

The code of conduct for penalty notices and information and FAQs for parents can be found on the Lancashire County Council [education penalty notice webpage](#).

- Parents and carers commit an offence if their child fails to attend school regularly. Schools are required by law to consider requesting a penalty notice where a student has 10 sessions (which is the equivalent of 5 days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10-school week period.
- Where a student's attendance falls below 80%, the school will refer the case to the Court Officer and either a fixed penalty or prosecution will be considered. The school never takes such action lightly and we make every effort to work with parents and carers to improve attendance. However, where intervention is deemed ineffective, we will actively pursue such action to ensure we meet statutory requirements.

Prosecution

- Where parents are clearly failing to fulfil their legal obligation (Education Act 1996 Section 441 and 441A, Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) prosecution will be recommended.
- Prosecution may be pursued where a fixed penalty notice fails to ensure improvement.

Alternative provision and use of directions

There is a range of circumstances when students might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are:

- Students who have been excluded, either for a fixed period of more than 5 days or permanently.
- Students unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons.

- Students required to attend another venue for the purpose of improving behaviour, either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (via a managed move).
- When a student is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written direction or notice informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend.
- Where a student is required to attend alternative provision for other reasons, the issuing of a written direction is considered best practice.

Notifications school must submit to the local authority

Admissions

- The school must notify the local authority within five days of adding a student's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held within the admission register about the student.
- This duty does not apply to students who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided (currently Lancashire does not).

Leavers

- The school must notify the local authority when a student's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the student's name is removed from the register.
- This duty does not apply where the student's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided (Lancashire currently does not).
- Where a school notifies a local authority that a student's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the required information as laid out in regulation.
- In addition to submitting a notification about removal from roll, some circumstances also require school to make referral to other local authority teams such as the Elective Home Education team or the Children Missing Education team. Schools may also contact their School Attendance Consultant for advice on removing children from roll.

Students who fail to attend

- The school will inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Children missing education (CME)

- Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.
- Local authorities should trace those children and ensure they receive a full-time education.
- If a student has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the local authority, before deleting the student's name from the register.
- In such cases, school should undertake a home visit, prior to a referral being made to the local authority Children Missing Education team.

Removal from Roll

The school is guided by the local authority in accordance with the criteria set out in Regulation 9 of the Education (Learner Registration) Regulations 1995 (amended 1997 and 2001).

The Attendance Office is responsible for identifying students who are missing and for liaising with the local authority and informing the authorities of any removals from roll.

Deletions of names from the admission register

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A student's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when students' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of students whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a student's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the student will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the student normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the student normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the student's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the student is going to live with and the date the student will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the student's other school and when the student began or will begin to attend the school

- The reason under which the student's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered student and their attendance at any given time. Students' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

Lancashire County Council (The Local Authority) - Attendance

School Attendance Consultants (SACs)

- SACs are schools' first point of contact for attendance advice regarding individual students and the whole school.

School Attendance Legal Team (SALT)

- Following requests from schools for legal interventions in the event of failure to attend school regularly, SALT undertakes enforcement processes, including penalty notices, prosecutions, parenting orders, education supervision orders and school attendance orders.

Reporting to Parents on Attendance

- There are daily reports on attendance and punctuality on ClassCharts
- Formal Progress Reports to parents at the end of the Autumn term and at the end of the Summer term include data on attendance and punctuality
- Letters are sent home during the year to congratulate students on 100%, excellent, good, improving attendance or to raise concerns where attendance is an issue
- The school communicates with parents via text message, email, phone calls and letters regarding attendance and follows the guidance given in the DfE document: 'Toolkit for schools: communicating with families to support attendance' (Sept 2023)

Staff Training

- Frontline staff involved in attendance receive regular training on the following:
 - DfE Updates
 - EBSA (Emotionally based school avoidance)
 - Register codes
 - the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances
 - the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers
 - the school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance

- the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to students who need it.

Review of Whole School Attendance Policy

- Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic High School will review this policy annually and more frequently if necessary.

Appendix: Attendance Register Codes

Present Codes	
/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	Sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip
W	work experience
Absent Codes	
Authorised Absences	
C	exceptional circumstances
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the student NOT the parent)
Unauthorised Absence	
G	holiday (not agreed)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Z	student not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (eg holidays, insets and polling station days)

Appendix: School attendance and the law

There are many pieces of legislation and government regulations and guidance that are relevant to school attendance and to children and their parents and carers. The list below relates to this attendance policy but is not exhaustive.

Parents and carers

Duty to ensure children receive education

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 covers the duty of parents to secure the education of children in their care who are of compulsory school age and states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and*
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have,*
either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Offence if a child does not attend regularly

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly, their parent is guilty of an offence.

The offence is absolute as the only defences available to the parent are those statutory defences listed within that section of the Act, i.e.:

- the child was absent with leave granted by the school;
- the child was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;
- absence was on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs;
- that the school is not within statutory walking distance and that the local education authority has made no suitable transport arrangements or enabled the student to become registered at an alternative nearer school.

Compulsory school age

Section 8 of the Education Act 1996 establishes that a child becomes of compulsory school age on the start date of the term following her/his fifth birthday, or that day if her/his fifth birthday falls on the day term starts.

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which he/she reaches the age of 16 or if he/she reaches 16 after the last Friday in June but before the start of the new school year.

Legal definition of "parent" in relation to attendance

The law requires that all "parents" are held responsible for their child's attendance. This definition can include any person who has care of the child. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states:

Meaning of "parent".

(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or*
- (b) who has care of him.*

Thus, the definition of "parent" means all natural parents, whether they are married or not, and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

Schools

Attendance and absence registration codes

Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, published May 2022, applies from September 2022 and will become statutory no sooner than September 2023.

Data protection

Schools must ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. See the school's Privacy Notice for information about how personal data will be used.

Duty for schools to include attendance information in reports for parents

The Education (Student Information) (England) Regulations 2005

Duty for schools to notify the local authority when students join or leave school

Regulation 12 of The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Duty for maintained schools to publish attendance data

What maintained schools must publish online, DfE guidance

Duty for schools to report attendance concerns about individual students to the local authority

Regulation 12 of The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Duty for schools to report attendance data to Government

Section 537A of the Education Act 1996 and

Complete the school census, DfE guidance for schools and local authorities on what data government requires

Duty for schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, DfE, regularly updated

Leave in term time *

September 2013 amendment to The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

* This regulation does not apply to academies, though many adopt this as good practice.

Legal interventions

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child who is on a school roll fails to attend regularly and those absences are recorded by the school as unauthorised.

Legal interventions are available under the following Acts, Guidance and Regulations:

- Section 444 of the Education Act 1996
- Section 36 of the Children Act 1989
- Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- School attendance parental responsibility measures 2015

Students with health needs who cannot attend school

Supporting students at school with medical conditions: Statutory guidance, DfE, 2015

Students with individual needs and specific barriers to attendance

When considering the individual needs of students and families who have specific barriers to attendance, schools should be mindful of their obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Equality Act 2010. Schools may wish to refer to the Technical Guidance for Schools in England, published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which outlines the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for schools.

Regulations regarding participation in performances

The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014

Regulations regarding removal from roll

Regulation 8 of The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Regulations regarding the school day and number of sessions

The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999

Requirement for state-funded mainstream schools to deliver a school week of at least 32.5 hours by September 2023.

Minimum expectation on length of the school week: information note