



Mexborough St John the  
Baptist C of E Primary School

# Attendance Strategy

**Improving attendance is everybody's business.**

Written: September 2024  
Reviewed: September 2025  
Next review: September 2026

## Attendance

*"Take even more care of the education of young people entrusted to you than if they were the children of a king."*

- Med 180.3 – feast of St Hilarion

## Our Vision

*We love and value all of God's children, creating an inclusive environment that helps all to flourish.*

Our school aim is to ensure that all children are able to achieve their very best by taking full advantage of the education opportunities that are available to them. We hope to do this by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality and creating an ethos in which good attendance is valued by both school and parents/carers. When children attend school regularly, they are more likely to succeed as well as learning social skills, giving them the opportunity to engage positively with their peers and building strong friendships.

## The Law

The law in the UK 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.

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.

## The impact of poor attendance

EVERY DAY COUNTS		
Attendance	96% or better is the JMAT attendance target for all children	
	LOST LEARNING DAYS	LOST LEARNING HOURS
96 – 100%	0 - 8 days	Up to 48 hours
94 - 96%	8 - 12 days	Up to 72 hours
92 - 94%	12 - 15 days	Up to 90 hours
90 - 91%	15 - 19 days	Up to 114 hours
Below 90%	20 or more days	More than 120 hours

## Our School Approach

Our school approach is written in conjunction with the DFE 'Working together to improve school attendance'. We work together with partners to ensure that we have the right culture in school to

promote good attendance alongside the right support being offered at the right time to enable pupils to fully access education.













We recognise that the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex and therefore remain professionally curious at all times, seeking to expose the barriers to school attendance. We build strong relationships with our families, ensuring that they know we are a source of support at all times, that we are approachable and that we genuinely want to achieve the very best for their children.

Below explains our school strategy:

Expect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our attendance policy sets out the clear expectations of the school. All staff are familiar with the policy because good attendance is everyone's responsibility. This policy is shared with parents annually, is available on our website and is communicated with pupils in the appropriate ways.</li> <li>• School attendance expectations are set at the point of admission to our school.</li> <li>• Attendance expectations are reinforced at transition, SEND reviews and parent meetings.</li> <li>• Attendance forms part of parent meetings and our expectations are set out clearly.</li> <li>• All children engage in Celebration Assembly each week which reinforces the school attendance target of 96% and celebrates class attendance.</li> <li>• Weekly dojo for children who arrive on time with 100% attendance each week.</li> <li>• The use of the school zip wire every Friday for the class with the highest attendance.</li> <li>• The top 3 classes achieving above 96% earn additional playtime minutes as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> place – 15 minutes (plus use of the zip wire) 2<sup>nd</sup> place – 10 minutes 3<sup>rd</sup> place - 5 minutes</li> <li>• If a class achieves 100% attendance, they will receive buns for the whole class in addition to the additional 15 minutes playtime and zip wire.</li> <li>• Afternoon tea will be provided for children that achieve 100% attendance for that term.</li> <li>• Attendance data is communicated weekly with parents on our newsletter.</li> <li>• Attendance data, alongside our expectations, are included on annual school reports.</li> <li>• Attendance expectations are shared with all stakeholders.</li> <li>• Class teachers talk to their pupils about the importance of attendance regularly in class, alongside assemblies.</li> <li>• All families are regularly reminded that term time holidays are not authorised under any circumstances and that holidays taken in term time may be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN).</li> <li>• All families are aware that a leave of absence request needs to be submitted for any planned absence from school.</li> <li>• First day calls are made where a child has not attended in line with Safeguarding policy; this reinforces our expectation that children should be in school, acts in line with our safeguarding policy and is a first step in supporting families with attendance.</li> </ul>
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## Monitor

- Attendance is tracked on an individual basis. Any pupil who does not have attendance levels of 96% or more at the end of each half term is discussed by the attendance team and appropriate actions are agreed and tracked for impact.
- Half termly letters are sent to families informing them of their child's attendance level should this be a concern.
- Additional letters are sent to those families who are already working with school on a regular basis (e.g. children with a temporary long-term illness, a partial timetable or a specific medical plan) to inform them of their child's attendance.
- Attendance is monitored at each Pupil Progress meeting when discussing barriers to pupil progress and is also included on all SEND review paperwork.
- Letters are sent half termly where attendance has significantly improved.
- Each pupil is tracked across the year so that patterns can be monitored carefully.
- Pupils who end the year being monitored for attendance become a focus family for the start of the new year.
- Pupils whose attendance is below 92% are monitored more closely and dips in attendance between monitoring points results in an attendance team discussion. Action is then decided based on the known circumstances. This is also discussed with families. These families are prioritised for support.
- Attendance is tracked by year group and contextual factors (e.g. Pupil Premium) each half term, so that the attendance team can monitor their levels of attendance and pursue enquiries and investigations for underperforming groups.
- Staff are professionally curious, looking for patterns of absence to highlight to the attendance team.
- Lateness is monitored to identify families who are frequently late and may require additional support.
- RecordMy is used to record any interim discussions about attendance with families.

Listen and understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an inclusion team made up of:</li> </ul>									
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Mrs Idell</b> Head Teacher</td><td><b>Mrs Oldroyd</b> Attendance Lead and Admin Assistant</td><td><b>Mrs Saltis</b> SENDCo/Assistant Headteacher</td><td><b>Mrs Loftus</b> Inclusion Manager</td></tr> </table>							<b>Mrs Idell</b> Head Teacher	<b>Mrs Oldroyd</b> Attendance Lead and Admin Assistant	<b>Mrs Saltis</b> SENDCo/Assistant Headteacher
										
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Admin Assistant is a parent's first point of contact when discussing their child's attendance, including as first day caller. Her warm and supportive manner ensures families know we want to help them in ensuring their children attend well at school.</li> <li>It is made clear on all communications about attendance that that aim of our systems are to support and empower families, rather than punish.</li> <li>When a pupil's attendance is identified as a concern by the attendance team, the relevant communication is shared with emphasis on supportive practice. At every step of monitoring attendance, families are made aware that they can speak to school.</li> <li>Where attendance requires a formal attendance meeting (below 92%), the attendance team meet with families to discuss barriers, ways to support and ensure school have all the relevant information. This is recorded in the form of an Attendance Contract, signed by both parties and revisited the following half term.</li> <li>As a school we continually look to employ supportive strategies and techniques to improve pupil attendance.</li> <li>The strategies and techniques and increase or decrease in significance as the child or family needs more or less informal support.</li> </ul>										
Facilitate Support			<b>Tier 1 Universal Support</b> Good communication with parents - clear expectations Parents to inform school of the reason for absence or lateness Attendance Letters Attendance Meetings Bagel breakfast for all Regular attendance communication on newsletters Weekly Attendance Celebration Attendance included at parents' meetings, SEND reviews and on end of year reports. School nurse available at parent meetings							
			<b>Tier 2 Targeted support for groups</b> Access to Breakfast Club Morning jobs/tasks Key person welcome Priority list of morning calls where absence has not been reported by parents Change of entry point/routine Focused morning activities Routines and boundaries classes Liaison with/referral to external agencies where required (BOSS, ASCETS, CAMHS, School Nurse) Attendance contracts Individualised reward systems							

			<p><b>Tier 3</b> Support is used for individual pupils</p> <p>School funded places at breakfast Club/After School Club Liaison with/referral to external agencies where required BOSS, ASCETS, CAMHS, School Nurse) Separate entrance point/start time Welcome by a key adult Temporary part time timetables Bespoke SEND provision Visual timetables Reward charts/motivational jigsaws School based early help Parenting courses (early help) Attendance contracts Next step identified as formal pathway (LA) Wake up calls</p>
Formalise support		<p><b>Tier 1</b> Support</p>	
		<p><b>Tier 2</b> Support</p>	
		<p><b>Tier 3</b> Support</p>	
		<p><b>Tier 4: Formalised Support</b></p>	<p><b>Tier 4 is formalised support, where Tier 1-3 school based support has been ineffective</b></p> <p>School begins to issue attendance pathway letter 1 and letter 2 to reinforce the severity of the situation. School seek support from the Local Authority Attendance Team. Referral to Early Help (with consent) Attendance below 50% - refer to MASH.</p>
Enforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalised support continues throughout this stage.</li> <li>Weekly attendance reviews.</li> <li>Pathway letter 3 including a FPN is issued.</li> <li>Following FPN, should attendance fail to improve, attendance pathway letters 2 and 3 are issued again and school seek to take a case to the Local Authority School Attendance Panel (LASAP) to seek an education supervision order.</li> </ul>		