



Uplands Junior School
Attendance Policy and Pathways
March 2022 – Updated January 2024

Intent

Uplands Junior School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

This policy has been written in conjunction with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – article 28 right to an education.

We are committed to:

- Following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that: *‘the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise’.

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies within the Disability Discrimination Act (2010)
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

1. Key roles and responsibilities

- 1.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Uplands Junior School.
- 1.2. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school’s complaints policy.
- 1.4. The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Uplands Junior School with the assistance of the attendance secretary within school.
- 1.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for following the attendance policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will

also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.

- 1.6. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
 - 1.7. Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.
 - 1.8. Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that pupils attend school every day.
 - 1.9. Pupils are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.
2. Definitions
- 2.1. Uplands Junior School defines “absence” as either:
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Not attending school for any reason.
 - 2.2. Uplands Junior School defines an “authorised absence ” as:
 - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
 - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
 - Religious or cultural observances for which the school have granted leave.
 - An absence due to a family emergency.
 - 2.3. Uplands Junior School defines an “unauthorised absence” as:
 - Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
 - Truancy before or during the school day.
 - Absences which have never been properly explained.
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
 - Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
 - Leaving school for no reason during the day.
 - 2.4. Uplands Junior School defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:
 - Missing 15 per cent (15%) or more of schooling across the year **for whatever reason.**
3. Training of staff
- 3.1. At Uplands Junior School, we recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at risk pupils and informing the Headteacher.
 - 3.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the attendance policy as part of their new starter induction.
4. Pupil expectations
- 4.1. Pupils will be expected to attend school every day and will sign an agreement at the beginning of each school year.

5. Attendance procedure and pathways

Upland Junior School Pathway for Attendance Issues

Day 1

- Telephone call from parent to explain absence. Record absence in register and expected date of return.
- **No parental contact** – School to telephone/text parent (and additional contacts if needed) to establish reason for absence.
- **No reason obtained** – If child is subject to CP plan or Looked After contact allocated Social Worker. Or if there are any known concerns that may require urgent intervention seek advice from school attendance officer and a visit may be arranged by SLT.

Day 2

- Repeat Day 1 procedure.

Day 3

- Repeat Day 1 procedure.
- **No parental contact** – visit home from the SLT team and inform Education Welfare Officer of concerns or MASH team.

Day 4

- Telephone call required from parent to explain continued absence and expected date of return. Medical proof to be sent to school.

Day 5

- Absence letter sent to parents. If child is known to social services contact social worker. Record actions of interventions. Update Education Welfare Officer.

Day 6 – 10

- Continue to use school level support where appropriate (letters, telephone, liaise with family) to try to resolve issue. Seek further advice/support (from EWO) or support from external services if required.
- **Proceed to Pathways for children with attendance issues 2.**

Uplands Junior School Pathway for Attendance Issues 2

- First day contact system in place (for safeguarding reasons as well as attendance monitoring).
- See flowchart 1 for 'Early in School Intervention'.
- Low level attendance issue identified by school (no prescribed level of absence).
- Pupil placed on Uplands Attendance Tracker

School Action 1:

- Contact with parents and child as per tiers of intervention set out in the school attendance policy (e.g. letters, phone calls and in-school meetings).
- **Has attendance improved?**
- **Yes** – Monitor future attendance
- **No** – Education Welfare Officer and Attendance Officer monitor attendance and meet with parents every ¾ weeks. Minutes of meetings sent to Headteacher.

School Action 2:

- Consider school based range of strategies (e.g. Parenting contract, Attendance Panel) and agree appropriate target and timescale for review.
- Review all information and consider need for an 'Early Help' plan – to be discussed with parents.
- **Has attendance improved?**
- **Yes** – Monitor future attendance
- **No** – School Action 3

School Action 3:

- All absences unauthorised unless medical evidence is provided.
- Within 2 to 4 weeks hold an in-school target review meeting to monitor progress and decide upon next intervention.
- EWO and Attendance Officer hold meeting to offer help and advice. Minutes of meetings sent to Headteacher.
- **Has attendance improved?**
- **Yes** – Monitor future attendance
- **No** – Undertake and Early Help
- **No** – Continue with in-school support
- **No** – Action plan agreed and set attendance targets

If no improvement Education Welfare Officer will start legal proceedings.

If at any point there are concerns about the safety or welfare of the child, follow safeguarding procedures immediately.

6. Contact information

- 6.1. Parents/carers must provide accurate and up to date contact details including three alternative contacts.
- 6.2. Parents/carers are responsible for updating the school as soon as possible if the details change.

7. Attendance Officer

- 7.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the local School Attendance Officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement.
- 7.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the local Attendance Officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices. (see Attendance Pathways).

8. Lateness

- 8.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 8.2. The school day starts at 8:50am. Pupils should be on the playground at this time.
- 8.3. Registers are marked at 8:50am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in school by this time.
- 8.4. The register closes at 9:00am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 8.5. Attendance after the register closes will receive a late mark to show that they are on site. The minutes late will also be recorded on SIMs.

9. Term time leave

- 9.1. At Uplands Junior School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 9.2. Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.
- 9.3. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis.
- 9.4. Uplands Junior School will give consideration to any request and accept or decline it on individual merit bearing in mind government guidance and any exceptional circumstances presented by the parent.

Legislation states.

An application for leave of absence should (and from certain schools must) not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

- 9.5. If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and will attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice if the absence is 5 days or more from the local authority.

10. Monitoring

- 10.1. Uplands Junior School monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year using an attendance tracker and attendance module on SIMs.
 - 10.2. Uplands Junior School's attendance target is 97.5 per cent (97.5%).
 - 10.3. Details of our attendance levels are published monthly on our school Newsletter and are available upon request from the office.
11. Religious Observances
- 11.1. Uplands Junior School will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
 - 11.2. Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.
12. Appointments
- 12.1. As far as possible, parents/carers should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
 - 12.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card must be sent to school.
 - 12.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they must be signed out by a parent/carer.
 - 12.4. Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.
13. Young Carers
- 13.1. Uplands Junior School understands the difficulties that face young carers.
 - 13.2. Uplands Junior School will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
 - 13.3. Uplands Junior School takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate
14. Attendance rewards at Uplands Junior School
- 14.1 Uplands Junior School rewards good attendance in the following ways:
 - Weekly class attendance trophy presented in Awards assembly
 - A non-uniform day for any class achieving 100% attendance over a week
 - A prize for each child in the class plus the class teacher for the Best attending class over a term
 - A chance to win a £10 voucher each term for those individuals achieving 100% or 97%+ attendance
 - Yearly certificates for those individuals achieving 97%+ over the academic year
 - Uplands Junior School Attendance prizes for those achieving 97% over the academic year.
 - 14.2 Parents are informed twice yearly (February and July) of their child's attendance level and how this compares to expectations.
 - 14.3 Class and overall school attendance figures are published on the monthly Newsletter.
 - Parents will receive a copy of their child's attendance record at parents' evening in February and with reports in July.

This policy may be adapted to match any government guideline due to a pandemic.

This policy will be reviewed in March 2024 or sooner if any legislation changes.

