

Flanshaw Junior, Infant and Nursery School

Attendance Policy

Updated: April 2026
Ratified by Governors:
To be reviewed: April 2027

Introduction

We strive to create an environment that enables and encourages every member of our community to aspire to excellence. For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is essential that they attend school regularly. Your child should be in school, on time, every day that the school is open, unless an absence is truly unavoidable.

Regular attendance is vital, and we rely on your support to ensure your child makes the most of the learning opportunities available to them. This policy outlines how we can work together to promote excellent attendance and support your child's ongoing success.

Why regular Attendance is Important

Regular attendance at school means that your child can make the most of their education and improve their chances in adult life.

School can also help your child's social skills such as making and developing friendships. A regular and punctual attendance pattern will help your child when they enter the world of work.

The link between attendance and attainment in school is clear. The more a pupil is in school the more they increase their opportunity to fulfil their potential.

It is a legal requirement to educate your child/children from the term after your child turns 5. If your child is not in education or missing out on education then it may result in a fixed penalty notice and possible prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance

The school is committed to ensuring that every pupil has full access to high-quality education. Regular attendance is essential for learning, wellbeing, social development, and long-term achievement. We work in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies to promote excellent attendance and to address any barriers that prevent pupils from attending consistently.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Establish a nurturing and inclusive culture where pupils feel safe and motivated.
- Share clear attendance expectations with all families through newsletters, meetings, and the school website.
- Track attendance weekly and take action where concerns develop.
- Celebrate high attendance and improvements through certificates, assemblies, class awards, and positive contact home.
- Send half-termly attendance information to parents/carers to keep them informed of their child's attendance.

Targets

Our school has a target attendance rate of **97%**. We expect every pupil to attend school regularly and aim to achieve attendance of **97% or higher**.

We actively work in partnership with parents and pupils to support good attendance and understand that challenges can sometimes arise. For pupils whose attendance falls below **97%**, we closely monitor the situation and offer support to help improve attendance wherever possible.

We are always willing to work with families to identify any barriers and put appropriate support in place. Good attendance is essential for your child's learning, progress, and future success.

Attendance in Early Years

Attendance in early years settings (0–5 years) is not statutory, but regular attendance is widely considered essential for child development, building foundational routines, and safeguarding.

- **Developmental Outcomes:** Good attendance directly links to better social skills, communication, and emotional resilience. It helps children build peer relationships, develop confidence, and prepare for school routines.
- **Routine and Security:** Consistent attendance helps children understand the "rhythm of the week," providing a sense of security and belonging.
- **Safeguarding:** Regular attendance allows providers to spot early warning signs of family stress, neglect, or other vulnerabilities.

The law relating to Attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 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'

The law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Understanding types of attendance

Present Codes:

/ or \ (Present am or pm): Student is present in school during registration.
L (Late): Student arrived late before the register closed.
B (Educated off Site): Student is at an approved, supervised off-site educational activity.
K (Education provision provided by LA): Student is receiving education arranged by the local authority.
P (Sporting Activity (Approved)): Student is participating in a school-approved, supervised sporting activity.
V (Educational trip): Student is on a school-organised residential trip or supervised educational trip.
W (Work Experience): Student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.

Authorised Absent Codes:

C (Other Authorised Absence): Leave for exceptional circumstances.
C1 (Other Authorised Absence): Absence for a regulated performance or employment abroad.
C2 (Other Authorised Absence): Pupils on part-time timetables.
J1 (Interview): Leave to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
E (Excluded): Student is excluded but still on the admission register (up to the sixth consecutive day of a fixed period or permanent exclusion).
M (Medical/Dental Appointments): Absence due to medical or dental appointments that could not be scheduled outside school hours.
R (Religious Observance): Absence for religious observance on a designated day.
S (Study Leave): Study leave granted sparingly to Year 11 pupils for public exams, with students still able to attend school for revision.
T (Traveller Absence): Used when Travellers are travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I (Illness): Used for any form of illness, including Covid-19 illness if not distinguished.

Unauthorised Absent Codes:

G (Family Holiday (Not Agreed)): Holiday not authorised by the school or exceeding the period determined by the headteacher.
N (No Reason): Reason for absence not provided; if no reason is provided after a reasonable time, it should be changed to O.
O (Unauthorised Absence): School is not satisfied with the reason given for absence.
U (Late (After Register Closes)): Student arrived after the register closed.

Persistent Absenteeism (P.A)

Persistent absence is defined as attendance below 90%, whether absences are authorised or unauthorised. This means that a pupil has missed 10% or more of their schooling. Over a full school year (190 school days), 90% attendance equates to 19 days of lost learning. Even occasional absences can accumulate quickly and have a significant impact on progress, wellbeing, confidence, and social relationships.

The school is committed to reducing persistent absence through early identification, supportive intervention, and strong partnership with families.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to a Fast Track to Attendance procedure and are at risk of Fixed Penalty Notices and/or prosecution when improvements to attendance are not made. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Education Welfare Services (EWS) who monitor whole school data regularly.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent from school, please contact the school office by calling 01924 290360 or emailing reception@flanshawjin.co.uk.

When reporting an absence, please provide:

- Your child's name
- Their class
- The reason for the absence

If this information is not provided, the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

If we do not hear from you, we will send a Parent Hub message or attempt to contact you by telephone. If there is no response on the first day of absence, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

For safeguarding reasons, a home visit will be made on the third day of any absence.

Update contact information

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year. You must contact school within a working day if contact details change. Failure to do this breaches your home school agreement.

Education Welfare Officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, then the Education Welfare Officer will become involved. The EWO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, they can ask the Local Authority to use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Local Authority themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting Wakefield Council on 03458506506.

Lateness

Schools are legally required to take a register of pupils first thing in the morning and at some point, in the afternoon. The government advises that schools can keep the register open for up to 30 minutes though the school can set a shorter period of time.

If a pupil is late, but the register is still open they are marked as late. If the register has already closed when a pupil arrives late and without a satisfactory explanation, it may be classed as an unauthorised absence. This may lead to legal action for not ensuring regular and punctual school attendance.

Punctuality is important because if, for example, a child arrives 15 minutes late at school each day, they lose almost 2 weeks of education a year.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts at 8.45 am and we expect your child to be in class, ready to learn, at that time. Registers are marked by 8.55am and your child will receive a late mark (L) if they are not in by that time. At 9.15 am. the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a (U) mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. After 3 late marks (L) you will be issued with a "3 lates letter". If no improvement is made a second warning letter may be issued. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer or the Headteacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach school at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. If no improvements follow a referral to the Welfare Officer will be made who will invite you to a meeting to discuss your child's punctuality. If your child accumulates 10 or more Late U/O codes in a term you may face the possibility of a Penalty Notice.

Leave in term time

The Government implemented legislation effective from 19th August 2024 which means that requests for a child's leave of absence cannot be authorised, except in exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education does not consider a need or desire for a holiday, or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation, to be an exceptional circumstance.

As a school we generally do not authorise term time holidays. Any 'exceptional circumstance' requests should be made to the headteacher through a term-time holiday request form. If you do wish to still take your child out of school during term time then we ask you to contact school to inform us.

As of January 2026, Wakefield Council has updated its penalty notice policy for school attendance. Unauthorised absences—including term-time holidays, lateness, or truancy—result in fines of £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. Fines are issued per child, per parent.

- **Cost:** £80 per parent/carer if paid within 21 days; £160 if paid between 22-28 days.
- **Threshold:** Fines are considered after 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a term.
- **Scope:** Penalty Notices apply to unauthorised holidays, poor attendance, and persistent lateness.
- **Repeated Offences:** A maximum of two penalty notices can be issued to a parent for a child within any 12-month period. A third offence may lead to direct prosecution, which can result in fines of up to £1,000

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Michael Woodburn – Headteacher

Kirsty Green – Attendance officer

Michaela Coyle – Education welfare officer LA

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

Our school promotes excellent attendance to ensure every child achieves their full potential. We have an attendance target of **97%** and expect pupils to attend school regularly and on

time unless an absence is unavoidable. Attendance is monitored closely, and we work in partnership with families to identify and support any barriers to regular attendance. Attendance below **90%** is classed as persistent absence and may involve additional support or external agencies. Term-time holidays are not authorised, and unauthorised absences or persistent lateness may result in penalties. Good attendance is essential for learning, wellbeing, safeguarding, and future success.

Please be aware that inappropriate behaviour towards members of staff and other professionals will not be tolerated. If you are abusive and/or violent towards members of school staff, on school premises, on the telephone or elsewhere, staff will take appropriate action. The police may be contacted, you could be banned from the school premises temporarily or permanently and you may be prosecuted.