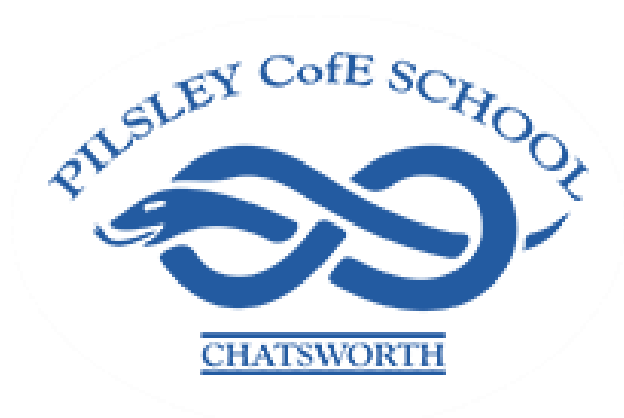


Pilsley CE Primary School & Nursery



Attendance and Absence Policy

Last Reviewed	14 July 2026
Reviewed By (Name)	Emma Bond
Job Role	Headteacher
Next Review Date	14 July 2027

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Statement of Intent

Pilsley CE Primary School believes that good attendance is essential for children to flourish, feel secure and achieve their full potential. Regular attendance enables children to develop positive relationships, build confidence and resilience, and access the full breadth of learning opportunities available to them. It also supports their social, emotional and academic development, helping them to establish good habits that will benefit them throughout their education and into later life.

At Pilsley CE Primary School we recognise that strong attendance is a shared responsibility between school, parents and carers, and we are committed to working in partnership with families to promote and support good attendance for all pupils. This policy aligns with current DfE guidance and the principles of the Derbyshire Attendance Toolkit.

We are committed to:

- Promoting excellent attendance (target 96% or above).
- Early identification of attendance concerns
- Working in partnership with families
- Providing support before sanctions
- Safeguarding children through robust attendance monitoring

Legal Framework for this policy

This policy is based on the Education Act 1996, Equality Act 2010, Pupil Registration Regulations, DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance and Derbyshire County Council Attendance Guidance.

Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board oversees implementation of this policy. The headteacher ensures day-to-day management. Teaching and clerical staff monitor attendance, record reasons for absence and report concerns. Parents are responsible for ensuring regular attendance and communicating about absence with the school office. Parents/carers will be informed of attendance concerns and attendance percentages at appropriate intervals throughout the academic year.

Definitions

Authorised absence includes illness, medical appointments and exceptional circumstances.

Unauthorised absence includes holidays and unexplained absences. Persistent absence is defined as attendance below 90%. See below for further information:

Pilsley C of E Primary School defines absence as:

- Not attending school for any reason
- Arrival after the register has closed.

Morning registration is at 9am

Morning sessions start at 9 am, Children are expected to arrive by: 9 am, Registration closes: 9:20 am

Afternoon registration is 1pm

Afternoon sessions start at 1pm, Children are expected to be in class by 1pm, Registration closes: 1.20pm.

Pupils who arrive after the start of the registration period are defined as late arrivals.

Authorised absence includes:

- Illness where the school has accepted the reason
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours
- Religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances agreed by the school

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Keeping a child off school without a valid reason
- Term-time holiday that has not been authorised
- Absence for shopping, birthdays or day trips
- Unexplained absences
- Arrival after registers have closed

Persistent absence:

- This is defined as attendance below 90% (missing 10% or more of schooling).

Absence Procedures

If a child is expected to be absent from school, parents and carers must inform the school on the first day of absence, either by telephone or by email. This is an important safeguarding measure to ensure the well-being of all children and allows the school to offer support where needed. The school will follow up all unexplained absences via phone call.

Reporting Absence

Parents and carers must:

- Contact the school **on the first day of absence**, ideally before 9:00am
- Provide a clear reason for absence.
- Maintain contact with the school for ongoing absence. Parents and carers should call or email the school office via email on each morning of continued absence, ideally before 9:00am

Where no reason is provided:

- If a pupil is absent and no reason has been received, the school will attempt to contact parents/carers on the first day of absence. Where safeguarding concerns exist and contact cannot be established, further checks may be undertaken in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- If no response is received, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**

The school may request medical evidence where:

- Absence is frequent or repeated
- Attendance is a concern

(Medical evidence may include appointment cards, prescriptions, hospital letters or other appropriate professional evidence.)

Where a pupil has extended unexplained absence or the school is unable to establish their whereabouts, Derbyshire Children Missing Education procedures will be followed and referrals made where appropriate.

Term-Time Leave:

- Leave of absence during term-time will **not** normally be authorised
- Requests must be made in advance, in writing.
- The Headteacher may only authorise leave in exceptional circumstances

Absence will not be authorised for:

- Holidays, family celebrations, convenience or cost reasons.

The school follows the National Framework for Penalty Notices introduced by the Department for Education. Where thresholds are met, requests may be made to Derbyshire County Council for a Penalty Notice to be considered.

Attendance Monitoring and Thresholds

The school monitors attendance weekly:

- 96% and above: expected attendance.
- 95% or less: early concern and monitoring
- Below 90%: persistent absence
- Below 50%: severe absence

Severe absence is attendance below 50%. Pupils in this category will receive intensive support and may involve multi-agency planning and Education Welfare Service intervention.

Attendance is monitored half-termly for emerging patterns including recurring illness, frequent Monday/Friday absences, persistent lateness, and attendance decline over time.

Lateness

Persistent lateness will be monitored in the same way as attendance concerns. Where lateness becomes a pattern, parents/carers may be invited to attend a meeting to discuss support and next steps.

Graduated Response Flowchart

100%–96% Attendance: Universal Support

- Good attendance promoted and celebrated.
 - Routine monitoring.



Attendance Concern Identified (approaching or below 96%)

- Early discussion with parents/carers.
- Explore barriers and offer support.



Attendance Does Not Improve

- Attendance concern letter issued.
- Monitoring and review period agreed.



Attendance Below 90% (Persistent Absence)

- Formal attendance meeting with parents/carers to understand and identify attendance barriers.
- Attendance Improvement Plan implemented.



Limited Improvement

- Referral to Education Welfare Officer/Attendance Team.
 - Further targeted support.



Continued Unauthorised Absence

- Final review and warning regarding legal options.



No Improvement Despite Support

- The School may request that the Local Authority considers a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action in line with statutory guidance.

Derbyshire Guidance

Pilsley C of E Primary School follows the Derbyshire Attendance Toolkit processes to ensure families receive timely and appropriate support. This includes offering early help where concerns first arise, working in partnership with parents/carers to identify and remove barriers to attendance. The school may also engage with multi-agency services, such as health, SEND or family support teams, to provide a coordinated approach. Where attendance does not improve despite support, we will work with the Education Welfare Service to explore further strategies and, if necessary, follow formal escalation procedures, always aiming to support families and secure the best outcomes for every child.

Barriers to Attendance

We understand that some children may face challenges in attending school, such as anxiety, additional needs, family circumstances or health needs and concerns. We are committed to working sensitively with each child and their family to understand these barriers and provide support that is tailored to their individual needs.

Children Missing Education (CME)

Pilsley C of E Primary School recognises its duty to identify and respond to children who may be missing education. A child going missing from education is a potential safeguarding concern, as prolonged absence or a lack of contact may indicate that a child requires additional support or that there are wider concerns affecting their welfare, safety, or access to education. The school will make all reasonable enquiries to establish a pupil's whereabouts and maintain contact with families where attendance is a concern. Where these enquiries are unsuccessful, or where a pupil leaves the school without a confirmed destination, the school will follow Derbyshire County Council Children Missing Education procedures and make referrals to the local authority and other relevant agencies as appropriate. The school will work in partnership with families and external services to ensure that all children remain safe and receive their entitlement to a suitable education.

Monitoring and Review

Attendance is reviewed regularly by SLT and governors. This policy is reviewed annually. See cover for the date of the latest review.