

READ SCHOOL ATTENDANCE & CME POLICY

(including notes on missing child procedures and Child Missing from Education)

1. Introduction

It is vital that pupils attend school, on time, every day in order to gain the greatest benefit from their education and a good record of punctuality and attendance helps our pupils' chances of a successful future.

Read School pupils are encouraged to take full advantage of their educational opportunities through maximum attendance and are expected to attend all prescribed lessons and activities. Parents and teachers have a duty to ensure that pupils attend school for every school day except in the case of illness or if prior permission for absence has been granted.

At Read School we expect that every pupil should aim for an attendance level of 95% or above (fewer than 8.5 days absence in a year). Persistent absence is defined as an attendance rate of 90% or below (17 days or more absence in a year).

2. Punctuality

Good punctuality is essential for a pupil's progress. Pupils who are late for school miss learning and develop bad habits resulting in them being unprepared for the world of work. Pupils who are late for school may receive detention. If their lateness becomes habitual we will write to inform parents and may ask them to come to an attendance and punctuality meeting.

3. Statutory Framework

The legal framework governing school attendance is summarised in School attendance:

Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police is published by the Department for Education (DfE):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

The School also complies with guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) and advice published by the North Yorkshire County Council, regarding school attendance, which can be found by following this link:

<https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/school-attendance>

4. Parental responsibilities

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school. Parents should:

- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and ready to learn. The school day begins at 8.45 am and pupils are late once the register is closed at 8.50 am. Pupils arriving after registration must make their presence known at reception on their arrival.
- instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.

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- impress upon their children the need to observe the school's code of conduct.
- take an active interest in their children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour and attending parents' evenings and other relevant meetings.
- work in partnership with School to resolve issues which may lead to nonattendance.
- notify School if their child is absent and also provide an explanation on the first day of any absence (and for any other subsequent period).
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours if feasible.
- avoid booking holidays during term time.
- Parents should inform the School Reception or Form teacher as soon as possible if a pupil is absent, explaining the absence before the registration session to be missed.

There are times when a child needs to be absent and it is the parent's responsibility to request leave of absence or to explain the reason if the absence is unexpected. Unexplained absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**.

5. School responsibilities

It is the school's responsibility to keep a record of attendance. It is also our responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

The school will monitor absence and if it has concerns about the welfare of a child it will seek advice as explained in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

In the event of a fire drill or other emergency situation, the School must be able to carry out an immediate headcount to ascertain the number of pupils physically present on site.

The School is responsible for supporting the attendance of our pupils and for dealing with problems that may lead to non-attendance.

Registration data will be available for Inspection when required and the Deputy Head will be responsible for providing data for inspections,

See also notes on Child Missing from Education (CME) below.

6. A Supportive and Collaborative Approach to Attendance

At The Read School, we are committed to working in partnership with pupils and their families to ensure every child can achieve their best possible attendance. We understand that barriers to attendance are often complex and that a supportive, collaborative approach is the most effective way to help our students.

How We Work with Families

We will:

- **Build Strong Relationships:** We believe that open and trusting relationships are the foundation for improving attendance. We will actively listen to and understand the barriers to attendance that a pupil and their family may be facing, whether they are related to physical or mental health, special educational needs, or other challenges.
- **Develop a Joint Action Plan:** When a pupil's attendance becomes a concern, we will not proceed with legal action. Instead, we will work with the pupil and their parents to create a clear, documented action plan. This plan will outline the support the school will provide and the actions the family will take, with the shared goal of improving the pupil's attendance. This approach is in line

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with the "support first" principle of the DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance (August 2024).

- **Assign a Lead Worker:** To ensure continuity and effective communication, a member of staff, such as the Attendance Champion or a pastoral lead, will be assigned as a lead worker for the family. This person will be the primary point of contact and will coordinate support both within the school and with external agencies.

Collaboration with External Agencies

The Read School will not hesitate to work with external partners, including the local authority, health services, and other agencies, when a pupil's attendance is at risk of becoming a persistent or severe concern. We will share relevant information in a timely manner to facilitate access to the support the family needs. This collaborative effort ensures that all services are working together to remove barriers to attendance and support the child's well-being.

This collaborative and supportive framework is a core part of our commitment to ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive at our school. This is a crucial element of our overall safeguarding culture and is fully endorsed by the governing body.

7. Pupil's absence from school

Absence due to illness

Parents are asked to phone the school office on the first day of absence and if your child continues to be ill the absence needs to be reported to the reception office daily by phone or email to enquiries@readschool.co.uk. If such a phone call or email is not received the absence will initially be recorded as unauthorised. Parents can expect a call from the reception to ask for an explanation of the child's absence.

On return, the pupil should bring a note to their form tutor to confirm the reason for absence in writing.

Pupils who are absent due to illness for 5 days or more should be covered by a medical certificate or permission for the school to contact your GP.

If a child is absent through illness, work will not be set for them to complete as it is the School's expectation that a sick child should be resting. All Read School pupils have access to the suite of Google Classrooms which serve as a repository for teaching resources used and assignments or homework set.

If your child is to be absent for a longer period of time and is capable of completing schoolwork, parents/carers should make contact with the Form Tutor, or Head Key Stage to determine what support is needed and what arrangements for catch up need to be made, in the best interests of the pupil.

Medical appointments

Requests for pupil absence due to medical appointments outside of school (e.g. doctor, dentist, orthodontist) should be made in writing to the pupil's tutor. This letter should be signed by the tutor and presented at reception before the pupil leaves the school. The pupil must sign out at reception and also back in again if they are returning to school after the appointment.

Parents must inform the School in advance of any appointments giving approximate times of leaving and returning to school.

Holidays

The school's holidays are extensive and provide an opportunity for a deserved break from school work. Parents are asked to note that absence for holidays is very disruptive to their child's education and are

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asked to keep such requests to an absolute minimum. The School recognises that the impact of absence during term are greater during Key Stages that are closer to public examinations than at the earlier Key Stages

There is no entitlement for absence for a holiday and requests for this type of absence should be made directly, in writing, to the Head who will consider the circumstances of each individual request.

Absence for other reasons

Pupils must remain on school premises from morning registration to the end of the last afternoon lesson unless they have the permission of the Deputy with the exception of Sixth Form students who have no afternoon lessons or after-school commitments; they may go home provided they follow proper registration and signing out procedures. Pupils in Year 11 and 13 may also be granted study leave during periods of public examinations.

There may be other reasons for absence such as specific family events or attendance at specific opportunities linked to the talents and interests of your child.

Such requests should be made directly in writing to the Head who will consider the circumstances of the request. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, of itself, oblige the School to accept it.

8. Exeat Procedure

The Head or Deputy Head issue Exeats on receipt of communication in writing or via a telephone call from parents about a planned absence. When a pupil leaves School, he or she must sign out at School Reception, where staff will check that an Exeat form has been completed.

If the pupil is not on the Exeat list, the School Secretary will contact the Deputy Head or Head to confirm permission can be granted. Pupils returning from an Exeat should sign back in at School Reception.

9. Monitoring and support for good attendance

The school uses a traffic lighting system to monitor and encourage good attendance:

	Attendance	Intervention
Green	95 - 100 %	Attendance is above national expectation and is GOOD attendance
95 % national expectation		
Amber	90 - 94.9 %	This requires pupils to be monitored closely. Letter home from the PLT Tutor meets with parents to discuss attendance
Pink	85 - 89.9 %	Pupil to attend some counselling about their attendance. Further letter home. Deputy Head/SL meets with parents to discuss attendance issues.
Red	Below 85 %	Advice sought from and potential referral made to North Yorkshire Attendance Team

10. Attendance and Safeguarding

At The Read School, we believe that consistent attendance is vital for both academic success and a child's overall well-being. We recognise that a child's attendance is a key safeguarding indicator.

As stated in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE, 2024, para 19), "securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation" and must be closely linked with safeguarding and wellbeing.

Therefore, we have a clear procedure for addressing attendance issues. We understand that consistently poor or irregular attendance, as well as a child being absent from education, can be a warning sign of a range of serious safeguarding concerns, including:

- **Child sexual abuse or exploitation**, including online harms.
- **Child criminal exploitation**, such as involvement in 'county lines' drug trafficking.
- **Neglect** or other forms of abuse.
- **Issues related to physical or mental health**, including anxiety.

Our staff are trained to be alert to patterns of non-attendance and will report any concerns to our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. We will work in partnership with families and external agencies to ensure that any child who is struggling with attendance receives the necessary support to overcome barriers and thrive.

11. Unauthorised Absences

In cases of unauthorised absence, the pupil has responsibility to catch up on any work missed.

The School has a legal duty to report extended unauthorised absence to the Local Authority (currently defined in excess of 10 days). In cases where parents wilfully withhold a pupil from school, or persistently refuse to co-operate with efforts aimed at effecting a return to satisfactory school attendance, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from Children's Services

This may result in legal proceedings on the grounds that no other course of action is available and the pupil will be removed from the School and identified as a "Child Missing from Education".

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If a student is deleted from the school register when the next school is not known, the School is required to report the circumstances as soon as possible to the Local Authority in which the pupil lives.

See Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding and Child Protection for further information.

12. Children Missing from Education (CME)

The school will monitor all pupil absences from school and promptly address any concerns about irregular attendance with the parent/carer. All reasonable attempts will be made to identify a pupil's whereabouts.

The school will follow protocols on CME set out by North Yorkshire's Children Missing Education guidance September 2016.

The school will provide an annual pupil roll for the school and will make a weekly return to the NYCME team of all in year non-standard transitions of leavers and admissions. This will include nil returns.

A referral will be immediately to the Children Missing Education Co-ordinator when:

- There has been 10 days of unauthorised absence
- No response by the parent/carer to enquiries
- A destination school is not known
- When there are welfare concerns regarding the child.

NY Children Missing Education Co-ordinator contact : Julie Parrish 01609 798013
Julie.parrish@northyorks.gov.uk

13. Missing pupil - Action to be taken by staff

If you suspect a pupil is missing during the day:

- Report the missing pupil to the School Reception who will check that the pupil is not in lessons, the First Aid Centre, the library, a music lesson or an appointment and will also check other likely whereabouts. Finally she will explore mobile phone contacts and contact parents of day pupils. In the case of boarders she will inform the Head of Boarding. The Deputy Head will also be informed.
- If a boarder goes missing in the evening, night or at weekends the Head of Boarding should be informed. The Head of Boarding will initiate enquiries and check information as to the pupil's possible whereabouts.
- If the pupil is still not found the Deputy Head will be informed and he will ask his or her friends where he or she might be. If it is a boarder the Head of Boarding will conduct these enquiries. It will be stressed to them that it is a serious matter and individual judgement used about whether to declare an amnesty on disciplinary action.
- If the pupil is still not found the Deputy Head or Head of Boarding will instigate a search of the school grounds and inform the Head. The Deputy Head or Head of Boarding will inform parents of the missing pupil.
- The Deputy Head or Head of Boarding will use teaching staff, non-teaching staff and responsible pupils as necessary; determine zones to be searched and time limits; set a point for searchers to report back to; ensure that searchers have mobile phones for ease of contact; instruct that no one should place themselves in further danger.
- The Deputy Head or Head of Boarding will inform the Head of the results of the search. If the pupil is still missing the Head or Deputy Head will inform the parents and contact the Police.

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Once the safety of a pupil has been ascertained:

- The pupil will be spoken to ascertain if there is any further action to be taken. This could range from reminding the pupil of procedures; enacting the procedures of other policies such as the Behaviour Policy or Safeguarding Policy; offering counselling and support.
- Parents will be informed that their child has been found and the reasons for the disappearance.

14. Attendance Data and Record-Keeping

The school maintains its attendance and admission registers electronically, in full compliance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. This ensures that all data is secure, accurate, and readily available for monitoring and analysis.

In line with this, every entry in our registers is stored electronically for a minimum of **six years**.

Furthermore, we are committed to sharing daily attendance data with the Department for Education (DfE), as this is a mandatory requirement for all schools and is a key part of our strategic approach to improving attendance. This process is consistent with the DfE's Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance (August 2024).

Ruth Ainley
August 2025

Next update: August 2026