



CONWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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Date: 26/03/2026

Last reviewed on: March 2026

Next review due
by: September 2027

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) Sept 2023
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher are responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance/Attendance Champion

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Keith Robertson and can be contacted via telephone on 0208 854 0897 or by email: adminshared@conwayprimaryschool.co.uk

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Meeting with families of children who have attendance below the expected national average and or have reached the level of absence that makes them a child who is persistently or severely absent from school.

The attendance officer is Miss Kevin Donnelly-Martin and can be contacted via telephone on 020 8854 0897 or by email: adminshared@conwayprimaryschool.co.uk

3.5 Class Teachers

The Business Team and Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes to mark a pupil either present or absent.

3.6 School Admin Staff

School [admin/office] staff will:

- Pass messages from parents/carers responding to absence text messages
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance team in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Ensure any absence emails are sent to the attendance team

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school every day and on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Provide the school with medical evidence if an appointment can not be made outside of the school day

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- View attending school every day as being important to their learning and progress
- Be proud of their good attendance

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- [For pupils of compulsory school age] Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

➤ The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school on time each school day. Our current school hours are 8:45 am to 3:15pm and the school gate opens at 8:30am. Once the gates have been opened the children are expected to go straight to their class line destination.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school attendance line on:

020 8854 0897 and option 1

Please leave a message stating your child's name, class and the reason for absence.

Alternatively you can inform the school of your child's absence from school through the Reach More Parents app.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 3 days, there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness or there have been lots of previous illness the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

School will monitor any child who falls below the expected national average.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides evidence for the appointment.

Requests can be made by emailing the attendance team at: adminshared@conwayprimaryschool.co.uk

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed it will be marked as late, using the appropriate code - L
- After the register has closed it will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code - U
- If your child is late 2 or more times a week, we will write to you asking for your support in getting your child to school on time.
- If your child continues to be late for school, we will ask to meet with you to see how we can resolve and support you, in getting your child to school on time.

The attendance team will identify patterns of lateness and offer support to families to ensure that we can work together to make sure that your child arrives to school on time.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a home visit.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- Where reasons for absence have not been given, we will write to you asking you to provide a reason for absence.
- Where reasons for absence are still not given the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- The school will follow and escalate safeguarding procedures if we are not able to contact parents or contacts.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels in their child's school report. If we have concerns about your child's attendance at school, we will call or write to you to inform you of this. If your child's attendance drops below the national average of 95% you will receive a letter to inform you of this. If your child's attendance continues to be of concern, then we will call you to discuss this or you may be invited in to school to discuss this. School will also seek to work with the whole family network for children (where relevant), to ensure that there is a clear agreed action plan in place for improving attendance.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- to attend the funeral of an immediate family member
- to attend the wedding of an immediate family member
- Visa and Immigration appointments
- Secondary School visits
- Religious Observance (see info below)
- 11+ tests (half day)
- Medical procedures

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. However, leave of absence during term-time for a family holiday/trip abroad is not acceptable and will not be authorized.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school admin office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

The school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence will not be granted.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed to this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carers must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. It is important to note that each parent/carer with responsibility for the child, will be issued with a Penalty Notice.

The national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

- For example: a 5 day holiday in term time would meet the national threshold.
- 5 days of unauthorised absence due to irregular school attendance would meet the national threshold.

Please see appendix for more information on Penalty Notices.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school promote good attendance through nursery to year 6. This is celebrated and rewarded throughout school by:

- Attendance Cup and Certificates for best class attendance
- Class rewards
- Individual and Class Points
- Improved attendance postcards
- Attendance Newsletter and update via the school website and My Child at School Portal
- End of Term certificates

7. Attendance Monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Provide regular reports to senior leadership and school governors

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Communicate and work with the Local Authority Attendance Officer families identified as being persistently absent from school
- The Attendance Officer from the Greenwich Attendance Advisory Service for Conway Primary School is Nicola Manton

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Attendance Team and Leadership. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance – Statutory Guidance from the DfE

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's
		absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Penalty Notices

Penalty Notice Fines for School Absence Have Changed

A National Framework for Penalty Notices has been introduced by the Department for Education and came into effect on the **19th August 2024**.

There is Now a National Threshold

There will be a single consistent **national threshold** for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools. In England, of **10 sessions** (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence, within a rolling 10 school Week period.

For example:

- a **5-day** holiday in term time (termtime leave), would meet the national Threshold.
- **5 days** of unauthorised absence due to irregular school attendance, would meet the national threshold
 - The 10 school week: period can span different terms or school years.

Who May Be Issued with a Penalty Notice?

Penalty Notices are Issued Per *Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example:

- 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent who allowed the absence, receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular school attendance, the fine amount will be:

- £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days.
- increasing to £160 if paid between days :22-28.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is considered and issued for term time leave or irregular school attendance, the fine amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular school Attendance, a Penalty Notice will **not** be issued.

- The case will be referred to the Magistrate's Court for consideration.
 - Upon Prosecution a parent can receive a criminal record and a fine of up To £2,500.

If you are experiencing difficulties in ensuring your child's regular school attendance, you are advised to speak with the Attendance Lead in your child's school, to address any support needs.

"Parent is defined as the natural parent, the person with whom the child lives and/or has day to day care of the child"

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







Attendance-Policy-25-27 (1)

Final Audit Report

2026-04-06

Created:	2026-04-02
By:	Keith Robertson (krobertson@conway.greenwich.sch.uk)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAHAHApRkMz27WGbbiIMOltoJF707zL4Gje

"Attendance-Policy-25-27 (1)" History

-  Document created by Keith Robertson (krobertson@conway.greenwich.sch.uk)
2026-04-02 - 3:41:12 PM GMT
-  Document emailed to Steve Piper (steve.piper1@ntlworld.com) for signature
2026-04-02 - 3:41:16 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Steve Piper (steve.piper1@ntlworld.com)
2026-04-02 - 9:53:31 PM GMT
-  Signer Steve Piper (steve.piper1@ntlworld.com) entered name at signing as Stephen Piper
2026-04-06 - 9:35:54 AM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Stephen Piper (steve.piper1@ntlworld.com)
Signature Date: 2026-04-06 - 9:35:56 AM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Agreement completed.
2026-04-06 - 9:35:56 AM GMT