



Yardleys
School
WORKING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FUTURE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Adopted by Trustees:

Signed:

Date:

This policy is reviewed annually by the Curriculum & Standards Committee

Review date:

POLICY INFORMATION

Date of last review	May 2026	Review period	Annual
Date ratified by governors	July 2026	Governors' committee responsible	C&S
Policy owner	Laura Yates	SLT member responsible	Laura Yates
Date of next review	May 2027		

Reviews/revisions

Review date	Changes made	By whom
September 2021	-P.5 – 'Parents and carers are expected to' – final bullet point changed from 'Where a student's attendance is below target (i.e. below 97%)' to 'Where a student's attendance is below expectation or is a concern' -P.6 'An Authorised Absence Is' – bullet point 4 added. -line added to bullet points of the impact on children who do not attend school regularly -P.7 'Absence Procedures' – paragraph 3 changed from 'an absence will result in an 'absence text message' being sent to 'absence will result in contact from school to home' -P.9 'COVID-19' section inserted. Wording amended on final bullet point regarding what is deemed an unauthorised absence	Philip Buckley
July 2022	-P.6 – Reference to Covid-19 and Track and Trace removed from the section 'An authorised absence is'.	Gurpreet Basra
April 2023	-P.5 – References to the AM register officially closing at 9.30am have been changed to 9.15am (from September 2024).	Philip Buckley
May 2024	-P.6 'When a child's attendance is a concern and drops below the persistent absence figure, the school may deem an illness not serious enough to warrant an authorised absence' changed to 'When the school deems an illness not serious enough to warrant an authorised absence' -P7 Name of the Attendance Officer changed from 'Mr M Tullet' to 'Ms S Akhtar'. Also, job title changed from 'Attendance Officer' to 'Attendance and Welfare Officer' -P.8 'Amongst a raft of further interventions, the school will utilise:' added before the bullet points listing possible attendance interventions -P.8 As per the 'Working together to improve school attendance' (2024; DfE): References to £60 fines have been changed to £80; references to £120 fines have been changed to £160; reference to the example of a £480 fine has been changed to £640. References to a potential 'Parenting Order' have been changed to 'Community order'.	Philip Buckley

May 2025	-P9 Reference to 'Covid-19' guidance has been changed to 'Public Health Guidance' -P9 The sentence 'At all times, Yardleys School will follow the attendance guidance set out by the DfE and Birmingham City Council with regards to Covid-19.' Has been changed to 'At all times, Yardleys School will follow the attendance guidance set out by the DfE and Birmingham City Council with regards to public health announcements at a national or local level.' -P5 'Policy Statement & Aims' changed from: 'To improve the overall attendance percentage of students at Yardleys School. To narrow the attendance percentage gap between different groups of students at Yardleys School. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all stakeholders in Yardleys School including students, parents, teachers and governors. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service as well as other agencies and services associated with student attendance. These policy aims have been put in place to promote safeguarding and educational attainment. Yardleys School believes that regular attendance is a key factor in the drive to raise standards of attainment and enhance the learning opportunities of all students.' To: 'At Yardleys School, the aims and intent of our attendance policy are those encapsulated in the Yardleys Charter; specifically, we aim to: • Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students. • Ensure academic excellence (all students achieve their academic potential). • Ensure personal development (all students develop as people, including developing the characteristics necessary to thrive at school and beyond their time at Yardleys School).' -P6 In 'Expectations – Yardleys School is committed to' the time PM registers are marked changed from '1.40' to '1.50'. Also, removal of (from September 2024) from the end of the sentence 'Students will receive an absence mark if they do not attend school by 9.15'. -P9 All references to 'Fast-Track to Attendance' changed to 'Support First'.	
May 2026	Clarification on the circumstances where evidence for absences may be requested. Key terminology edited to make it clear that 97% attendance is encouraged. Added detail about the school's breakfast club and opening time for students within the parent/carer expectation section. Clarification that unauthorised absences can lead to safeguarding risks, and where these safeguarding risks may lead to police involvement.	Laura Yates

June 2026	The removal of Mr Tilley as a HOY, the new HOY is TBC. An additional paragraph referencing SEND/ESBA has been added to acknowledge our understanding of the difficulties these issues may present. An additional section summarising the roles and responsibilities for school attendance. The time frame for PM registration has been added. Clearer detail is given on when and how absent students are contacted. A change in terminology from Education Welfare Service to as Education Legal Intervention Team. Details on the Penalty notices given, including: Penalty notices impact and timescales: Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in a 3-year rolling period. The first penalty notice is £160 if paid within 28 days. If paid within 21 days, it is reduced to £80. The second penalty notice is £160 if paid within 28 days, with no further reduced rate. If the child or young person's absence reached threshold for a third time an alternate legal intervention may need to be considered as another penalty notice cannot be issued. Extra details added on promoting and incentivising good attendance.	Laura Yates
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Dates of linked staff training (if applicable)

Date	Course title	Led by
September 2019	Boosting Attendance in your school	Creative Education
Ongoing	Changes to DfE attendance guidance disseminated on a regular basis to relevant colleagues	Philip Buckley
Half-termly	Attendance overviews by year and key student groups disseminated at HoY / SLT level	BYP

EQUALITY AND GDPR

All Yardleys' policies should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities and GDPR policies.

Statement of principle - Equality

We will take all possible steps to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, either directly or indirectly against any individual or group of individuals. When compiling, monitoring and reviewing the policy we will consider the likely impact on the promotion of all aspects of equality as described in the Equality Act 2010.

Statement of principle - GDPR

Yardleys School recognises the serious issues that can occur as a consequence in failing to protect an individual adult's or child's personal and sensitive data. These include emotional distress, physical safety, child protection, loss of assets, fraud and other criminal acts.

Yardleys School is therefore committed to the protection of all personal and sensitive data for which it holds responsibility as the Data Controller and the handling of such data in line with the data protection principles and the Data Protection Act (DPA)/GDPR.

Statement of principle – Yardleys Way

Yardleys School treats everyone equally and we value everyone the same irrespective of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy or maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

POLICY STATEMENT AND AIMS

At Yardleys School, the aims and intent of our attendance policy are those encapsulated in the Yardleys Charter; specifically, we aim to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.
- Ensure academic excellence (all students achieve their academic potential).
- Ensure personal development (all students develop as people, including developing the characteristics necessary to thrive at school and beyond their time at Yardleys School).

97 – 100%	95 – 97%	90 – 95%	85 – 90%	Below 85%
Absent for no more than five days throughout the academic year. Your attendance figure will almost certainly lead to you making excellent academic progress and achieving the best grades for your ability. You are investing very wisely in your future by attending school regularly. This means that you are positioning yourself to have excellent post-16 and career opportunities.	Absent for fewer than 10 days throughout the academic year. You have a reasonable attendance record that means that you are likely to achieve well and make good progress. You are investing well in your future by attending school at least 95% of the time. This means that you are likely to have strong post-16 and career opportunities.	Absent for up to twenty days throughout the academic year. <u>This means that you are missing out on a full month of education.</u> Your absence from school puts the majority of other students at an academic advantage to you as they are receiving a greater amount of education. You are likely to achieve a grade lower in every subject than if your attendance was 98%. You must improve your attendance now to ensure that you have a range of post-16 and careers opportunities.	Absent for up to 30 days throughout the academic year. <u>This means that you are missing out on six weeks of education (approximately a whole half-term).</u> Your absence from school means that you will under-achieve academically as you are missing so much learning – this is likely to be two or more grades per subject than if your attendance was 98%. You must significantly improve your attendance now to ensure that you have a range of post-16 and careers opportunities.	Your absence from school on such a regular basis means that you are missing so much learning that it is virtually impossible for you to keep up to date with your studies. You must act now and attend school everyday to ensure that you make academic progress and provide yourself with post-16 and careers opportunities.

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons are missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Students are expected to attend school every day. **It is the responsibility of parent(s)/carer(s) to perform their legal duty by ensuring children who are registered at Yardleys School attend regularly. The school promotes attendance of 97% or above.** Yardleys School endeavours to support parents/carers and students in this.

EXPECTATIONS FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

YARDLEYS SCHOOL IS COMMITTED TO:

- Promoting excellent attendance and reducing absence. We encourage all students to be reaching an attendance target of at least 97%.
- Keeping regular and accurate records of each student's attendance and reporting this to the DfE. AM registers are marked at 8:45am and PM registers are marked at 1.50pm. Registers are also taken every lesson within the first 3-5 minutes. AM register officially closes at 9.15am. Students will receive an absence mark if they do not attend school by 9.15. PM register officially closes at 2.20pm. Students will receive an absence mark for the PM register if they do not attend by this time.
- Acting immediately to address poor patterns of absence and poor punctuality in line with current legislation and guidance.

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Aim for 100% attendance.
- Attend Yardleys School every day and on time.
- The school day starts at 8:40am and students are expected in school at this time. Students who arrive after 8:45am will be recorded as late and sanctions applied in line with the school behaviour policy.
- Attend all lessons promptly.

PARENTS AND CARERS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Obey the Law. The Education Act (1996 & 2002) requires parents/carers to ensure that their child/children attend school on a regular basis. Non-compliance may result in legal action against parents/carers when they fail to cooperate with their legal obligation or attendance remains a cause for concern despite school interventions and action.
- Make sure that their children attend Yardleys School on time every day that the school is open. At Yardleys School we encourage all students to be reaching the attendance target of at least 97%.
- Make sure that their children arrive in the building at 8.40am each morning ready for school. If parents need to drop students off early (to allow multiple school drop offs) the school is open from 8.15am for students, with free breakfast available.
- Contact the school by telephone (Head of Year/Attendance Officer) on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence if their child is unable to attend for any reason, followed by a written note on return.
- Arrange medical and dental appointments outside school time where possible.
- Ensure that no holidays are booked during term time.
- Contact their child's Head of Year to discuss any concerns that they may have and which could affect their child's attendance.
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact details.
- Where a student's attendance is below expectation or is a concern, provide documentary evidence of medical conditions that have an ongoing effect on attendance.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

- Yardleys Trust Board is responsible for promoting a culture of high attendance, ensuring statutory duties are met, and holding school leaders to account for attendance outcomes.

- The Headteacher, Mr Basra, and senior leaders are responsible for implementing this policy, ensuring accurate attendance recording, analysing attendance data, and putting timely support in place for pupils and families.
- Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and engaging with the school where attendance concerns arise.
- Pupils are expected to attend school regularly and communicate with staff if they are experiencing difficulties attending.

The school will work in partnership with the Local Authority and other agencies where attendance concerns escalate beyond school-level support.

ABSENCE CLASSIFICATION

A student is classed as absent if they arrive to school after the register is closed or they do not attend for any reason. Absence from school disrupts the education of the individual and the whole class. Those children who do not attend regularly:

- Do not achieve well in exams
- Find it difficult to maintain friendships
- Are at more risk and makes them more vulnerable and more likely to be involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- Miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work.

Every half day absence from the school has to be classified by the school (not by parents), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of absence is required, preferably in writing.

AN AUTHORISED ABSENCE IS:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave. (NB: The school is not required to automatically authorise absence for sickness and where absence due to illness becomes frequent or ongoing, the school may discuss appropriate evidence or support options with parents, in line with DfE guidance).
- Medical, orthodontist or emergency dental appointments which fall unavoidably during the school day and the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observance for which school has granted leave (one day per academic year).

AN UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IS:

- Parents keeping the children from attending the school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival to school after the register has been closed
- Leaving the school for no reason during the school day
- Looking after other children or birthdays
- Parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to the school immediately to resolve the issue) are not acceptable reasons to be absent and will also be recorded as unauthorised.

- When the school deems that an illness does not reach the threshold to be considered an authorised absence, for example, headaches, stomach pain, a mild cold, sore throat etc.

Please note, that the authorising of absence is at the behest of the Headteacher and as such an absence may be unauthorised even if contact is made with the school by parents / carers.

PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

The school, in line with government legislation, defines persistent absenteeism (PA) as missing 10% or more (90% or less attendance) of schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Whilst a child may be absent because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any issues with regular attendance are best discussed between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is essential not to cover up their absence or give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives them the impression that attendance is not important and usually makes the issues worse.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of a student absence and also to inform us of any changes to contact details.

Parents are asked to contact the school before 8:00am on EACH day that their child is absent, informing us of the reason for the absence and when their child will be returning back to school.

Failure to inform the school of an absence will result in contact from school to home, followed by a home visit if necessary.

WHO TO CONTACT IF YOUR CHILD IS OFF SCHOOL:

Head of Year	Mr R Vaughan	0121 4650671
Head of Year	Mr S Sohal	0121 4645638
Head of Year	Ms Z Briggs	0121 4645627
Head of Year	Mr P Buckley	0121 4645641
Head of Year	Ms C James	0121 4645626
Attendance & Welfare Officer	Ms S Akhtar	0121 6750674

MEDICAL/DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Wherever possible, parents/cares should make every effort to avoid making medical or dental appointments during the school day. It is preferable to try and arrange these during holiday periods or at the beginning or end of the school day. An appointment at the beginning of the school day should not result in a whole day's absence from school. If an unavoidable appointment requires the student to be collected during the school day, they must be collected by an adult listed on the student's record.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVATION

Parents must inform the school in advance if an absence is required for the religious observance. Please note that religious observance will only be for major events and festivals. The school will only authorise one day of absence for religious events (e.g. Eid/Diwali).

LEAVE DURING TERM TIME (EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE)

The Department for Education has amended the regulations and guidance in relation to absences in term-time. **There is no automatic right for a parent to take their child out of school during term time and we require parents to observe the term times set.**

Since September 2013, the Department for Education only allow the headteacher to grant a leave of absence if there are exceptional circumstances. In determining whether or not an absence in such circumstances can be authorised, it is for the headteacher to determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Therefore, in the case of an unauthorised leave the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service will be notified and a Penalty Notice will be issued.

Any requests to leave during term time must be made in writing to the headteacher. A leave of absence form can be collected from reception.

Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider some absences to be educational but your child will still miss out on the teaching that their peers will receive. Children returning from an absence are unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed. Teachers then have to give more time to help individual children catch up on missed work. This poses a potential risk of the under achievement of other students in the class. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION

The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor the attendance and punctuality of every student throughout the year. Amongst a raft of further interventions, the school will utilise:

- There may be daily phone-calls and unannounced home visits by the attendance officer/pastoral member of staff if attendance or punctuality are deemed to be a concern; where safeguarding thresholds are met, this home visit may be made by the police.
- Student attendance concern letters may be sent from the Attendance Officer, a Head of Year or member of the school's Senior Leadership Team; we expect parents to adhere to the advice offered in these communications.
- The school will seek to offer 'Early Help' support wherever possible. This works most effectively when parents and carers have open lines of communication with school, including initiating contact and providing school with an overview of how students are getting on outside of school.

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS/CARERS AND/OR CHILDREN

The school will regularly contact and communicate with parents where attendance is below expectations. The school will discuss any issues which may be a potential barrier to attendance, such as a medical problem, and will work with parents and carers to overcome these. Any such support from the school does not negate the parents' legal responsibility to ensure their child is in school.

SUPPORT FIRST

Yardleys School uses the Birmingham City Council Programme 'Support First' to promote excellent attendance. This is a programme that ensures children and parents receive support for issues around attendance and also manage the legal process for students who have excessive absence from school that is not authorised.

ATTENDANCE AND SEND/ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Yardleys School recognises that some pupils may experience difficulties attending school due to special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mental health needs, or emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA). In such cases, absence will be approached with sensitivity and understanding. The school will work collaboratively with pupils, parents/carers, and where appropriate external professionals, to identify barriers to attendance.

LEGAL ACTION THAT MAY BE TAKEN INCLUDES:

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence. Unauthorised absence may become a safeguarding concern. Under education legislation, parents have a duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. Failure to do so, without reasonable excuse, may result in referrals to the Education Legal Intervention Team with the prospect of fines or prosecution.

- **Issuing penalty notices:** Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in a 3-year rolling period. The first penalty notice is £160 if paid within 28 days. If paid within 21 days, it is reduced to £80. The second penalty notice is £160 if paid within 28 days, with no further reduced rate. If the child or young person's absence reached threshold for a third time an alternate legal intervention may need to be considered as another penalty notice cannot be issued. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- **Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) – court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of prosecution costs and/or impose a Community Order.
- **Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A) – court can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Community Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Being taken to court could result in parents or carers having a criminal record.

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE

At all times, Yardleys School will follow the attendance guidance set out by the DfE and Birmingham City Council with regards to public health announcements at a national or local level.

REWARDING GREAT ATTENDANCE

The school would like to congratulate many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly and on time. Excellent attendance will be regularly acknowledged and rewarded through a variety of methods, e.g.:

- Certificates
- Acknowledgements in assemblies
- Celebration assembly
- Reward trips