

Student Attendance Policy

Approved By	Outcomes Committee	Date:	29/09/2025
Author	Director of Safeguarding and Attendance	Date:	08/09/2025
Signature			
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Signature			
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Joint Negotiating Council (JNC) consultation (where applicable)			
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1. Statement of Intent

The Respect Collaboration Trust believes that good attendance and punctuality are essential if pupils are to learn effectively and reach their full potential. The Respect Collaboration Trust strives to provide a welcoming, caring and safe environment where every member of the school community feels valued.

Respect Collaboration Trust understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment across our schools, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

2. Legal framework

2.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2025'
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Sharing daily pupil attendance data'

2.2 This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- SEND Policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Trust has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Working with the Executive Leadership Team in providing support and challenge around attendance
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Schools have regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.2 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the staff to the attendance lead role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

3.3 School staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

3.4 The Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil's name being deleted from the admission register unless exceptions apply.

3.5 Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.

- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

3.6 Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

4. Absence procedures

4.1 The Trust schools have robust procedures in place to ensure that every unexplained pupil absence is followed up promptly, in accordance with statutory requirements and safeguarding guidance.

4.2 Schools ensure that all absences are investigated to establish the reason, determine whether the absence is authorised, and take any necessary safeguarding action.

4.3 Accurate attendance records are maintained, using the correct statutory codes, and all data must be reported as required for census and compliance purposes.

4.4 Where a pupil's absence is prolonged or patterns of absence emerge, schools are expected to escalate their response in line with statutory processes, which may include home visits, engagement with families, and referrals to external agencies where appropriate.

4.5 The Trust schools exercise professional judgement regarding requests for medical evidence, only seeking such evidence where there is a legitimate concern about the authenticity of an absence.

4.6 Persistent absenteeism is addressed through structured intervention, including engagement with parents and, where necessary, notification to the local authority in accordance with statutory guidance.

4.7 Removal of a pupil from the admissions register must only occur in strict compliance with statutory regulations, following all reasonable enquiries and local authority procedures.

5. Attendance Register

5.1 Respect Collaboration Trust expects schools maintain accurate and compliant attendance registers through the use of their management information systems. Registers are taken in line with statutory requirements and attendance is recorded using the national attendance codes to ensure consistency across the Trust.

5.2 Schools are required to:

- Maintain accurate, real-time records of pupil attendance and absence.
- Use the full range of DfE attendance codes consistently, including codes for planned closures, induction days, and approved educational activities.

- Record remote education appropriately, ensuring absence and participation are coded in line with national guidance.
- Preserve all register entries for a minimum of six years.
- Share daily attendance data securely with the DfE through the schools management information system.

5.3 These expectations ensure that attendance across Respect Collaboration Trust schools is monitored, analysed, and reported in a standardised way, supporting accountability and enabling effective early intervention.

6. Attendance interventions

6.1 Respect Collaboration Trust requires all schools to implement systematic, evidence-based approaches to managing absence and improving attendance. Schools have clear escalation procedures that are applied consistently, to ensure that barriers to attendance are identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

6.2 Schools are required to:

- Establish and implement a range of targeted interventions to address barriers to attendance, including engagement with parents, carers, and external agencies.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of escalation procedures, providing robust evidence of what works in practice.
- Hold regular attendance reviews, led or attended by senior leaders, in line with agreed escalation processes.
- Apply graduated escalation measures before absence becomes entrenched, including written communication, meetings with families, and referral to local authority support where appropriate.
- Attendance data is analysed at individual, group, and cohort level to identify emerging patterns and to develop responsive strategies. Interventions should be tailored to the specific needs of pupils, with measurable impact.

6.3 In addition, schools promote a positive culture of attendance through recognition and rewards. Strategies should include a range of approaches such as written acknowledgements, certificates, positive communication with families, and enrichment opportunities, ensuring that good attendance is consistently valued and reinforced.

7. Working with parents to improve attendance

7.1 Trust schools will foster strong, respectful relationships with pupils and families, ensuring open communication about attendance expectations and the benefits of regular attendance. Schools will maintain accurate emergency contact information and share attendance data with parents regularly.

7.2 Where patterns of absence emerge, schools will work collaboratively with families to identify and address barriers, offering support before taking punitive action. Interventions will be sensitive to individual circumstances and may involve internal staff, such as the DSL or SENCO, as well as external agencies, including local authority services or children's social care, where appropriate

8. Children Missing Education (CME) and Absence from Education

8.1 Respect Collaboration Trust requires all schools to comply with statutory guidance on Children Missing Education (DfE, 2016) and to ensure that robust systems are in place to identify, report, and respond to any concerns. Schools must ensure that any pupil at risk of missing education is monitored closely, and that timely information is shared with the Trust, the local authority, and safeguarding partners as appropriate.

8.2 Prolonged or repeated absence must be recognised as a potential safeguarding concern. Schools are expected to monitor such cases systematically through the Attendance Lead and DSL, ensuring a graduated and proportionate response that addresses barriers to attendance and minimises the risk of pupils becoming children missing education.

9. Safeguarding

Regular attendance is a safeguarding priority. Schools must ensure that attendance processes are aligned with safeguarding procedures, including immediate action where a child's whereabouts are unknown.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Director of Safeguarding and Attendance, or sooner if required by changes in statutory guidance.