



Prescot Primary & Nursery School

Empower Today. Prepare for Tomorrow

Pupil Attendance Policy

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Pupil Attendance Policy September 2025

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1. Introduction

At our school, we believe every child has the right to an education that allows them to thrive — a principle rooted in Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We work together as a community of duty bearers — teachers, parents and carers — to ensure that all pupils can access this right through regular, punctual attendance.

Good attendance builds confidence, friendships and a sense of belonging. It helps children keep up with learning and develop the resilience they'll need for future success. We recognise that, at times, families may face challenges that affect attendance, and we aim to approach every situation with understanding and support.

This policy applies to all areas of Prescott Primary School and Nursery, covering both educational and nursery provision. It is the responsibility of everyone in our school community — including permanent and temporary staff, agency workers, governors, volunteers, visitors and those working on behalf of the school — to promote and support regular attendance and punctuality.

We are committed to maintaining an inclusive and supportive environment where every pupil can learn, grow and succeed. Guided by our mission of *"Putting the Learner First,"* we recognise that ensuring consistent attendance is a collective duty that enables every child to thrive. In doing so, we fulfil our vision of empowering our children today to prepare them for tomorrow.



2. Background

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential to take advantage of educational opportunities provided by law. Prescott Primary School and Nursery acknowledges its duty to ensure children attend school on time and regularly. This policy adheres to **current DfE guidelines, Children Acts, and relevant Education Acts and Regulations** to provide consistent attendance standards. While parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors collaborate with professionals and agencies to support positive attendance habits.

3. Policy Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to:

- Promote high levels of attendance and punctuality to improve pupils' achievement.
- Achieve a minimum **attendance rate of 96%** for all children, excluding those with chronic health conditions.
- Recognise good attendance and punctuality as vital aspects of school culture.
- Increase parental, carer, and pupil awareness of attendance's importance at each stage of education.
- Collaborate with parents, pupils, staff, and external services to realise full pupil potential without unnecessary absence.
- Foster a welcoming environment where pupils feel valued and safe, taking responsibility for their own attendance.
- Monitor attendance consistently, address difficulties, and celebrate attendance achievements.

4. Definitions

Authorised Absence: Absence with a valid reason and approval from the school, e.g., medical appointments or illness, upon notification.

Unauthorised Absence: Absence without school permission, even if supported by parents, e.g., holidays taken without permission.

5. Attendance Procedures

To promote good attendance, we:

- Maintain accurate registration processes and data recording via the **Arbor system**.
- Communicate expectations clearly to all stakeholders.
- Follow up on absences with first-day contact when necessary.
- Discourage term-time holidays.
- Refer cases of concern to the **Educational Welfare Service (EWO)** after school-led initiatives to improve attendance.
- Report attendance data to **Knowsley LA and the DfE** when required.

6. Responsibilities

Governing Body: Monitors school attendance data termly and holds the Headteacher accountable.

Headteacher: Manages overall attendance, trends, family contacts, referrals, and collaboration with external professionals.

Class Teachers: Monitor and report class trends, discuss attendance issues, and follow up on absence explanations.

Administration Staff/Learning Mentors: Record attendance, communicate with parents about absences, and notify concerns to leadership.

Parents/Carers: Ensure child attendance, notify school of absences, and collaborate with school initiatives for attendance improvement.

7. Registration

Morning activity runs from **8:30am to 8:50am** daily. Teachers complete electronic registers between **8:55am and 9:00am**, and again between **12:30pm and 1:30pm** (year group dependent) using Arbor software. Registers are retained for **three years** after use.

8. Lateness

Pupils arriving after **8:50am** must enter through the school office and will be marked as late (Attendance Code L) after 9:00am. Arrival after **9:30am**, without a valid reason, will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code U). Persistent lateness will result in communication with parents and, where appropriate, support being offered to address any underlying issues.

9. Early Collection

Parents and carers must inform the school office **in advance** if their child needs to be collected before the end of the school day, providing a clear reason for the early collection. Evidence of appointments (such as medical letters or text confirmations) may be requested.

The absence will be recorded for monitoring purposes:

- **Authorised early collection:** Code C (other authorised circumstances), Code M (medical/dental appointment) or Code I (Illness).
- **Unauthorised early collection:** Code O (unauthorised absence)

Early collection should only occur in exceptional circumstances. Regular or repeated early collection will be reviewed by the school and may prompt further discussion with parents or carers.

10. Absences

Parents and carers must notify the school **on each day of their child's absence**, providing a clear and specific reason. All absences are categorised as either authorised or unauthorised, as determined by the Headteacher. The school operates a first-day contact system to follow up on any unreported absences to ensure pupil safety and maintain accurate attendance records.

Valid authorised absences include illness (with potential medical proof if recurring), medical appointments, religious observance, and certain Traveller pupil absences. **Term-time holidays** are only authorised under exceptional circumstances.

11. Addressing Attendance Concerns

Prescot Primary School expects a minimum of **96% attendance**. Attendance concerns are raised with parents or carers through letters, meetings, and offers of collaborative support to address barriers to regular attendance. The school will adopt a graduated response to poor attendance in line with the **latest local authority regulations and code of conduct**. This includes:

- Initial contact with parents to discuss attendance concerns and offer support to improve the situation.
- Continued monitoring and, if necessary, follow-up meetings to track progress and engage the family in agreed improvement measures.
- If attendance does not improve despite school interventions, a referral may be made to the **Educational Welfare Service (EWS)** for additional support and guidance.
- **Persistent unauthorised absence** (defined as absence exceeding **10%** of possible sessions) may result in further action, including the issuing of **penalty notices**. The school's approach to penalties will reflect **evolving local authority guidelines** and may involve fines for parents/carers, consistent with the **Knowsley local code of conduct** for managing school attendance.
- In serious cases where unauthorised absence persists without adequate engagement from families, sanctions may escalate, potentially involving legal action.

The school remains committed to working with parents and external services to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to support families in achieving good attendance before considering enforcement measures.

12. Monitoring Pupil Attendance

- Our office staff and Learning Mentor have the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the Arbor attendance software. Regular meetings are held with the Headteacher to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns with parents.
- The school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.
- Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. **If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days in any half term** we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

13. Monitoring and Review of the Policy

This policy and procedures will be reviewed bi-annually in line with legislation, local and national guidance and presented to the Governing Board for approval.