

Tetney Primary School



Attendance and Absence Policy

Date adopted	September 2025
Updates	
Date of Review	September 2026

Whole School Attendance Policy

Tetney Primary School

Policy consultation and review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school and regularly thereafter through our school newsletter and other relevant opportunities.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on at least an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body October 2025. It is due for review September 2026.

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Introduction

At Tetney Primary School we recognise that positive behaviour and good school attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. There is a wide range of evidence as to the health and wellbeing benefits of school- age education.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly and on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called ["Working together to improve school attendance"](#) and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance including the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing education or absent from school. This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- Work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.
- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the suitable, full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.
- Our policy outlines the school's commitment to attendance. Our policy aims to provide clear guidance to all staff, parents & carers, pupils and governors about the responsibilities and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.
- Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:
 - Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.
 - Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other relevant legislation

Promoting regular attendance

At Tetney Primary School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Role	Name	Contact detail
Senior Attendance Champion	Jody Waddingham	admin@tetney.lincs.sch.uk

Improving school attendance is everyone's business, it is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils, and all members of the wider school community.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Give parents/carers information about attendance in our newsletters.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
- Submit a daily attendance report to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board of Tetney Primary School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Setting high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identifying a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and ensuring that there is a named senior attendance champion.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensuring the school engages and works effectively with the local authority Attendance Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders

focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.

- Ensuring high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker or youth justice worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensuring all school staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools.
- Ensuring that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time.
- Reviewing the school's Attendance Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

The Senior Management Team (including senior attendance champion) at Tetney Primary School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to all pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named senior attendance champion to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through half-termly reporting to the Governors.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated.
- Set out how Pupil Premium will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance.

All staff at Tetney Primary School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to all pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.

- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.

The member of staff responsible for attendance will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The member of staff responsible for attendance will support good attendance, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data.
- Undertaking attendance meetings with the Senior Attendance Champion, Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO, and other relevant staff members as necessary.
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole school attendance.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including the instigation of an Early Help Assessment and Plan and/ or the implementation of an attendance contract.
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent from school without contact from parents.
- Taking an active lead in delivering whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

Tetney Primary School requests that parents:

- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life so that we can offer support at the earliest opportunity.
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.
- Complete relevant Leave of Absence paperwork as necessary

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

Understanding types of absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival also disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of other pupils. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session.' Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the Headteacher. For the purpose of this policy, the school defines 'absence' as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

And "Regular" attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted such as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays taken during term-time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- Any other absence in term time which has not been agreed.

This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Persistent and severe absence

A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Over a full academic year this would be 19 school days (38 sessions) missed. Absence at this level will cause

considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as 'severely absent' (SA). Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support. The attendance of all pupils at our school is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in our policy. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice for parentally condoned absence, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court. Schools can decide to pursue legal proceedings for prosecution without issuing a penalty notice first when attendance is substantially poor.

A Penalty Notice can be issued under the following legislation:

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act
- In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.

See below for further information:

Penalty Notice	Details
First Notice in a 3 year period:	Issued to each parent. Charged at £80 if paid within 21 days £160 if paid within 28 days.
Second Notice in a 3 year period:	Issued to each parent. Charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
Third Notice in a 3 year period:	Alternative action will be taken, for example prosecution or other attendance legal interventions. Fines per parent are capped at two within any three-year period. If a parent is prosecuted for their child's non-attendance, they could face a magistrates court appearance and a fine of up to £2,500 and/or prison. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

Leave of absence

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances'. At Tetney Primary School, leave of absence is only granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances' and supporting evidence. Tetney Primary School will respond to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave. Tetney Primary School will treat each application individually before a decision is made. If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, it will be marked as unauthorised. Retrospective requests will not be considered and will also result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

(The same penalty threshold table above also applies to leave of absences).

Medical appointments and absences due to illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, a **Leave of Absence for Medical Appointment** request form must be completed. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation. Supporting evidence will be required such as appointment card or hospital letter to authorise the absence.

In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of an illness, we will speak to parents/carers regarding our concerns and look at what support can be put in place to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer. We will invite parents to attend a school-led Attendance Support Panel as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure

children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#) and Lincolnshire County Council policies. We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

Pupil absence for the purposes of religious observance

Tetney Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school using the **Leave of Absence form**.

Discouraging staggered starts in Reception

At Tetney Primary School, we recognise the importance of children attending school full-time from the start of their education. Staggered or part-time starts for children in Reception can have a negative impact on their overall school attendance and academic progress. We acknowledge that the introduction of 30 free funded hours of early education and childcare for 3 and 4-year-olds has meant that the majority of children now have experience of attending an early years setting for a full school day prior to starting Reception.

We will only consider part-time or staggered starts in exceptional circumstances, for example, where a child has significant additional needs that would make a full-time start detrimental to their wellbeing. In these cases, we will work closely with parents and any relevant professionals to develop a clear plan for the child to transition to full-time education as soon as possible.

For the vast majority of children, we expect them to attend school full-time from the beginning of the Reception year. We will work proactively with parents to ensure a smooth transition into school and to address any concerns they may have about their child starting full-time. We will provide support such as staggered drop-off and pick-up times and a gradual increase in hours, only where absolutely necessary to meet the individual needs of the child.

Our aim is for all children to be attending school full-time by the end of their first half-term in Reception. We will monitor the attendance of Reception children closely and engage with parents promptly if there are any concerns about part-time attendance impacting the child's progress.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils

Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller pupils are among the lowest achieving groups of pupils at every key stage in education, although some pupils achieve very well at school. We recognise that there are many complex and interwoven factors that may influence the educational attainment of these pupils. At our school, we have high expectations of all pupils, regardless of their background whilst recognising the lifestyle and cultural traditions of these communities. In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) the school will authorise the absence of a pupil who is a mobile child and is unable to attend school because:

- The parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place,
- The child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and

- The child has attained the age of six, that he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted

This provision applies only when the family has no fixed abode and are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. In these circumstances, parents have a duty to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When a family is trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Lincolnshire, if a family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time. Tetney Primary School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended Tetney Primary School in the last 18 months.

Parents can register their children at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place at Tetney Primary School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance. To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates

Register keeping and recording

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. Our registers are taken at 8:50 am and 1pm. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at approved educational activity or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone on 01472 812074 as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence (before 8:45am where possible) and on subsequent days of absence, until their child returns to school. Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office, where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.

A telephone call will be made daily to the parent of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence. The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

In the case of no contact with family, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will decide on the most

appropriate next steps to ensure that there are no safeguarding concerns related to the non-attendance. Where there are concerns that the absence of a child constitutes a risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed as per the Safeguarding Policy. We will also inform all professionals involved in supporting the pupil if there are unexplained absences from school in line with statutory requirements. We will also inform all professionals involved in supporting the pupil if their name is to be deleted from the school register.

Where the family is believed, on the balance of probabilities, to have taken an unauthorised term-time holiday and the parent is unable to supply appropriate evidence to the contrary, a local authority penalty notice will be issued in compliance with the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (DfE 2024) guidance.

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness, however where there is a significantly high level of illness absence that is not explained by the acknowledged symptoms of a specific medical diagnosis, parents may be requested to provide medical appointment evidence for all illness before further illness authorisation is given. No evidence will result in an unauthorised absence (O code). This will be used to indicate the severity of the absence through illness, highlighting to parents that this is unusual and requires appropriate medical scrutiny.

The school will offer support to parents and pupils where there is an attendance issue, including engaging support from other appropriate agencies. Where parents do not engage in this support and attendance fails to improve, a 'Notice to Improve' may be issued and, where this fails to secure improvement, a penalty notice and /or prosecution may follow.

The school will inform the local authority (LA), on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed ten school days or more without authorisation. If a pupil's attendance drops below 90% the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

Parents of pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence will be regularly notified of their child's attendance via letter. If there are concerns for attendance the Senior Attendance Champion will contact parents to discuss further. This may result in an informal or formal support, decided in agreement with parents, on a case by case basis. Parents of a pupil of compulsory school age, registered at Tetney Primary School, who fails to attend regularly, may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority (see Penalty Notice section).

Possible courses of action taken are summarised in the table below, dependant on attendance percentage:

Percentage Attendance (Year to Date)	Rating	Possible Courses of Action
95% or above	Expected attendance	• Continue monitoring
91 - 94%	Cause for Concern – at risk of persistent absence	• Letter of concern • Invited to meet with the Headteacher • Notice to Improve served
80 - 90%	Persistent Absence	• Letter of concern • Invited to meet with the Headteacher • Involvement of Education Welfare Officer or other outside agencies • Fixed Penalty Notice • Notice to Improve served
51 – 79%	At risk of severe absence	• Letter of concern • Invited to meet with the Headteacher • Involvement of Education Welfare Officer or other outside agencies • Fixed Penalty Notice • Notice to Improve served
50% or less	Severe absence	• Letter of concern • Invited to meet with the Headteacher • Involvement of Education Welfare Officer or other outside agencies • Fixed Penalty Notice • Notice to Improve served

At Tetney Primary School we will investigate and offer support to any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent (PA) and will not wait until attendance is below 90%.

Any absence without an explanation for ten consecutive days will be reported to the local authority through the Children Missing in Education reporting process. Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

Punctuality

The school regards punctuality as of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated. The start of school lessons are used to give out instructions or organise work. If a child is late they miss time with their class teacher getting important information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it may also cause embarrassment, which can lead to further absence.

The school gates open at 8:40am and the day starts at 8.50am. We expect parents to bring children into school via the main office, giving reasons for lateness, if they arrive after the gates have closed.

Pupils should be in their classroom at 8:50am when the day starts; registers are taken as follows throughout the school day:

- Registers are marked at **8.50am**. Pupils will be recorded as late – L code (Late before the close of register) if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- The register closes at **9:20am**. Pupils will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session.
- After lunch, registers are marked at **1:00pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- The register closes at **1:30pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.
- Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with a member of SLT, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our pupils and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

On-going and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action. If lateness persists, parents will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support will be offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness in any 10 week period, the school or local authority will be required to issue parents with a penalty notice.

Support Systems

At Tetney Primary School we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

- Write to you if your child's attendance is causing a concern and/or where punctuality is a concern;
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Attendance Champion or another member of SLT.
- Create a personalised action/support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child;
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate or undertake an Early

- Help Assessment & Plan with you;
- Refer the matter to an external agency for multi-agency support or if you have safeguarding concerns to make a safeguarding referral
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures if no contact has been made with parents by the 5th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate).
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

Absence related to a Mental Health issue

The school has a duty of care to promote children's mental health and wellbeing and embed this into the whole-school ethos and policies. As part of curriculum coverage, the school has a legal responsibility to teach pupils through a high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate curriculum about respectful relationships; emotional wellbeing and mental health. This is in addition to supporting each individual's social and emotional development.

The school recognises that there can be attendance challenges where a child has a SEMH issue, particularly a severe issue for which the child is receiving clinical treatment. Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams, or variable moods. The school maintains high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of pupils who are anxious about attending school and it is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend regularly and recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue.

Any associated anxieties about attending school should be mitigated as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. These adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with all parties, including parents.

Young carers

The school understands the difficulties that face young carers, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity. A caring and flexible approach will be taken to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate. The school, in conjunction with relevant authorities, will implement support for pupils who are young carers, to encourage their sustained and regular attendance at school in line with the school's expectations.

Pupils at risk of persistent absenteeism (PA)

Where pupils are at risk of persistent absenteeism, the school will track attendance at least half termly to target key groups of pupils needing support and use a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance. The school will rigorously, fairly and supportively use agreed escalation procedures including, but not limited to:

- Sending letters to parents to notify them of their child's attendance and the number of sessions missed due to absence
- Having regular reviews with staff, pupils and parents
- Engaging with LA attendance teams
- Using fixed penalty notices, notices to improve and prosecution as appropriate
- Hold attendance reviews and panels in line with escalation procedures.

The school will also ensure pupils potentially at greater risk of harm who need a social worker will be supported with pastoral and academic support, alongside action by statutory services in response to any unauthorised absences.

Following any absence the school will welcome pupils back and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps, as well as meet with pupils and parents to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems and establish plans to remove any barriers and provide additional support where required.

The school will lead regular check-ins with pupils to review progress and the impact of support provided and make regular contact with families to discuss progress.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education in school. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part-time timetable to meet an individual pupil's physical or mental health needs. [DfE guidance](#) is very clear about the reasons why a part-time timetable might and might not be used. We will only make use of part-time timetables in exceptional circumstances and in full compliance with the guidance, in particular:

- Any part-time timetable will be time-limited and will not be treated as a long term solution.
- It will have a target expiry data, after which a full time return to school will be expected.
- Part-time timetables will only be used to support a pupil's physical or mental health needs. They will not be used as a tool for managing behaviour.
- Part-time timetables will only be made with parental agreement and in compliance with the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- The school will mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C2 or X for non-compulsory school age pupils).

In line with Lincolnshire County Council guidance, we will notify the Attendance Team of all part-time timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed.

Notice to Improve

A notice to improve is a formal opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued in line with processes set out in the local authority's [code of conduct](#). It is led by the local authority and should include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was

not engaged with.

- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period.
- A clear timeframe for the improvement period of between 3 and 6 weeks.
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

School attendance and the law

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 introduced a National Framework in England. By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

National Framework for Penalty notices

There is now 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. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

For further information see the Lincolnshire Code of Conduct for issuing penalties regarding school attendance. Penalty notices - code of conduct – Introduction - Lincolnshire County Council

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours.

In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

We will work with parents and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

Deletions from the Register

At Tetney Primary School we will add and will only delete pupils from our school roll in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. In most circumstances, we will know in advance about pupils leaving our school; this will be planned and discussed with the parent in advance of the pupil leaving. At Tetney Primary School we will always work with families to gain information about the pupil's next school and/or address before the pupil leaves to reduce the risk of pupils becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

We follow Lincolnshire County Council's Child Missing Education procedures and will inform the Children Missing Education Team of all removals from our school roll no later than the date the child is removed in line with statutory responsibilities.

If a child is removed from roll to home educate, we can only de-register the child if we receive, in writing, the parent's intention to educate their child other than at school. The pupil will be de-registered on receipt of such a letter and Lincolnshire County Council will be informed of the removal from roll as outlined above.

The exception to the above is if the child is on the roll of a special school, has an EHCP, or is a CIN/LAC Child. In these cases, permission for parents to home educate must be given by the local authority. Tetney Primary School will follow Lincolnshire County Council's <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-attendance/pupil-attendance> when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown, the school will carry out joint enquiries with Lincolnshire County Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

Related policies

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- Safeguarding including child protection
- Medical needs
- Admissions
- Anti-bullying
- Exclusion
- SEND
- Teaching and learning
- Relationship and Behaviour

Statutory framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Working together to improve school attendance, DfE (August 2024)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE (January 2015)
- Children missing education, DfE (September 2016)
- Keeping children safe in education, DfE (September 2023)
- Working together to safeguard children, DfE (December 2023)