Attendance Policy

Updated September 2026

Purston Infant School Attendance Policy

In Line with Wakefield Local Authority Guidance (2024) and DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance

At Purston Infant School, we believe that excellent attendance and punctuality are fundamental to ensuring every child achieves their full potential. Regular school attendance supports children's academic progress, emotional wellbeing, social development and safeguarding.

We are committed to promoting a culture where attendance is valued by pupils, staff, parents and carers. We recognise that good attendance is achieved through strong partnerships between home and school and by providing appropriate support when barriers to attendance arise.

This policy reflects the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* and the Wakefield Local Authority Attendance Strategy, which promotes a graduated, responsive and partnership-based approach to improving attendance.

Aims

Purston Infant School aims to:

- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Ensure every child has access to their full educational entitlement.
- Foster positive attitudes towards attendance and learning.
- Identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Work collaboratively with parents, carers and external agencies.
- Remove barriers preventing regular attendance.
- Meet all statutory attendance responsibilities.
- Safeguard children through effective attendance monitoring.

Our ambition is for every pupil to achieve attendance as close to 100% as possible.

Legal Framework

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education and attend school regularly. [wakefield.gov.uk]

This policy is based upon:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Wakefield Attendance Strategy 2023-2026
- Wakefield Council Attendance Guidance 2024

Attendance Expectations

At Purston Infant School we expect all pupils to attend school every day unless there is a genuine reason preventing attendance.

Good attendance:

- Supports learning and progress.
- Develops friendships and social skills.
- Promotes wellbeing.
- Builds positive habits for later life.

Attendance will be monitored throughout the year and concerns will be addressed promptly.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body
The Governing Body will:

- Promote the importance of good attendance.
- Monitor attendance data and trends.
- Hold school leaders accountable for attendance outcomes.
- Ensure statutory duties are fulfilled.

Headteacher
The Headteacher will:

- Lead on attendance across the school.
- Ensure effective implementation of this policy.
- Monitor attendance and punctuality.
- Work with families and agencies to address concerns.
- Authorise or refuse requests for leave in exceptional circumstances.

Attendance Lead:
The Attendance Team will:

- Monitor daily attendance.
- Follow up unexplained absences.
- Maintain accurate attendance records.
- Liase with Headteacher to produce attendance reports.
- Liaise with Wakefield Education Welfare Service where appropriate.

Parents and Carers:
Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day and arrives on time.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence.
- Provide reasons for absence promptly.
- Work with the school to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Request leave of absence in advance where necessary.

Promoting Good Attendance
Purston Infant School will:

- Celebrate good and improved attendance.
- Share attendance expectations with families.
- Provide support where barriers exist.
- Maintain positive relationships with parents.
- Monitor attendance closely.
- Adopt a supportive and inclusive approach.
- Our expectation is that pupils aim for 100% attendance wherever possible.

Registration
Registers are taken twice each day:

- Morning Register - At the start of the school day.
- Afternoon Register - At the start of the afternoon session.

Registers are legal documents and must be completed accurately.

Punctuality
Punctuality is an important aspect of attendance.
Children arriving after the start of the school day will receive a late mark.

Where a pupil arrives after the register has closed, this may be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is provided. Wakefield Council guidance notes that late arrival after register closure may be treated as an unauthorised absence.
Repeated lateness may trigger attendance monitoring and support.

Parents should ensure children:

- Arrive in school on time.
- Are ready to learn.
- Have established routines that support punctual attendance.

Reporting Absence

If a child is unable to attend school, parents must:

- Inform the school attendance lead on the first day of absence.
- Provide a reason for the absence.
- Keep school informed if the absence continues.

Parents must do this:

- via email at the email address **attendance@purston.wakefield.sch.uk**
- via telephoning **01977 704344 – Option 1**

Messages should not be via Class Dojo or other informal communication methods.

If no contact is received, school will follow safeguarding procedures which may include:

- Telephone calls.
- Messages to emergency contacts.
- Home visits where appropriate.

First Day Contact Procedures

Where a pupil is absent and no reason has been provided, the school will:

1. Attempt to contact parents or carers.
2. Contact emergency contacts where appropriate.
3. Consider safeguarding procedures if a child cannot be located.
4. Record all actions taken.

Safeguarding remains the school's priority when responding to unexplained absence.

Medical Appointments

When a child is unwell, parents should notify the school as soon as possible.
Medical appointments should be arranged outside school hours wherever possible.
Where appointments must take place during the school day:

- Parents should notify school in advance.
- Evidence of the appointment may be requested.
- Pupils should attend school before or after the appointment whenever possible.

Medical appointment for attendance records can also be sent to the attendance lead via email at the email address **attendance@purston.wakefield.sch.uk**

Leave of Absence During Term Time

The law does not give parents an automatic right to take children out of school during term time for holidays.
The Headteacher may only authorise leave in exceptional circumstances.

Requests must:

- Be made in writing in advance.
- Clearly explain the exceptional circumstances.
- Be submitted using the school's Leave of Absence Request Form.

Each request will be considered individually.
Unauthorised leave may result in a referral to Wakefield Local Authority and the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

Monitoring Attendance

Attendance is monitored daily, weekly and termly.
The school analyses:

- Individual attendance.
- Class attendance.
- Group attendance.
- Persistent absence.
- Severe absence.
- Patterns of absence.
- Patterns of lateness.

Early intervention is used to prevent attendance concerns escalating

Supporting Attendance

Purston Infant School recognises that some children and families may face barriers to regular attendance.
Where concerns are identified, support may include:

- Informal discussions with parents.
- Attendance meetings.
- Attendance support plans.
- Early Help referral.
- SEND support.
- Family support services.
- Education Welfare Service involvement.

Support will always be the first response in line with Wakefield's graduated attendance approach.

Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil is considered Persistently Absent when attendance falls below 90%.

Severe Absence (SA)

A pupil is considered Severely Absent when attendance falls below 50%.

Where attendance reaches these levels, the school will:

- Meet with parents and carers.
- Explore barriers to attendance.
- Put support measures in place.
- Monitor attendance through formal review processes.
- Seek support from external agencies where appropriate.

Children Missing Education

Purston Infant School will follow Local Authority Children Missing Education procedures where:

- A family moves without notifying school.
- A pupil repeatedly fails to attend.

- The whereabouts of a child become unknown.

The welfare and safety of the child will remain the school's primary concern.

Safeguarding

Attendance is everyone's responsibility and forms an important part of safeguarding practice.
Attendance is a key safeguarding responsibility.
Poor attendance may indicate:

- Unmet needs.
- Family difficulties.
- Emotional wellbeing concerns.
- Neglect or other safeguarding concerns.

Attendance information will therefore be considered alongside all safeguarding information held by the school.
Staff must report concerns in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Attendance Rewards and Recognition

The school will promote positive attendance through:

- Celebration assemblies
- Weekly Attendance Race
- H.E.R.O
- Class recognition.
- Certificates.
- Positive communication with families.
- Displays and attendance awareness campaigns.

Recognition will focus on both excellent attendance and significant improvement.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through:

- Regular attendance analysis.
- Reporting to Governors.
- Attendance audits.
- Local Authority guidance updates.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation changes.

Policy Status: Statutory

Approved By:
Approved by: Governing Body
Headteacher: G.Bedford
Date Approved: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027