



Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School

**"With God in our hearts, we follow Jesus'
footsteps, as we love and learn together."**

Attendance Policy

Date: July 2026

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Schedule of review: Two years

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1. Aims

This policy demonstrates our commitment to fulfilling our obligations regarding school attendance, including those outlined in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (effective from 19 August 2024). This is achieved through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
 - Promoting good attendance and its benefits.
 - Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
 - Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
 - Acting early to address patterns of absence.
 - Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
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2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) **statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance** (effective from 19 August 2024) and **school attendance parental responsibility measures**. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority.
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
 - Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs.

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers (or delegate to a senior leader with responsibility for attendance).
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels.
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times.
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days.
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance (SENIOR ATTENDANCE LEAD)

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance, known as SENIOR ATTENDANCE LEAD, is responsible for:

- Leading, championing, and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers, and external agencies, where needed.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.

- Support teachers to talk to parents about attendance and punctuality and its impact.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lucy Stimson and can be contacted via 02083999854 or lstimson@oli.school

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 8).
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the headteacher/(authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices or when there is a risk of issue.

The attendance officer is Lucy Davey and can be contacted via Ldavey@oli.school or 0208399 9854.

3.5 Class Teachers and TAs

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions daily, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office by 9:00 and 13:25 on the same day.

TA's and Teachers should check in with the Attendance Officer regarding any questions or queries that they may have about a change in a child's attendance.

When there are ongoing punctuality issues, the class teacher will make first contact with the parent/carer, exploring the issue and explaining the impact of lateness on learning time. This meeting should be recorded on CPOMS under the attendance category.

For emerging attendance concerns, the class teacher will arrange an informal meeting with parents/carers to discuss the issues, understand any underlying causes, and explore potential solutions. This may include discussing any medical needs, anxiety, or family circumstances impacting attendance. This meeting should

be recorded on CPOMS under the attendance category. If required, discuss findings with the Head Teacher, Senior Attendance Lead or another member of the SLT.

3.6 School Admin Staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record them on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, where appropriate, to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Use the scripts prepared so that discussions with parents around attendance are consistent.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance by contacting the school for support.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day, on time.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

The school will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:50 am and ends at 15.10 pm for Reception, 15.15 pm for KS1, and 15.20 pm for KS2.

Pupils must arrive in school between 8.35 and 8.50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken by 9.00 am and will be kept open until 9.20 am. The register for the second session will be taken by 13.25 pm.

4.2 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00 am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office on 0208 399 9854.

When contacting the school, parents/carers should notify staff of the child's name, reason for absence, and anticipated duration of absence.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents should request leave of absence for holiday or exceptional circumstances by completing a request form for the attention of the head teacher.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register closes will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

When there are ongoing punctuality issues, the class teacher will make first contact with the parent/carer, exploring the issue and explaining the impact of lateness on learning time. If there is no change, a member of the SLT will meet with the parent/carer to discuss this further.

4.5 Following up on Unexplained Absence

If any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will follow the following

Office staff will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may call all emergency contacts.
- If contact cannot be made, a member of SLT should be informed, and SPA may be contacted.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent.
- Inform SLT if this is a continued absence (more than 2 days) or concerned about authenticity.
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, SLT will consider involving an education welfare officer.

A member of SLT offers support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance if appropriate.

SLT will identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.

Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, a written summary of the steps so far and support offered will be shared by SLT, and if only if no change occurs will a Notice to Improve will be issued.

4.6 Reporting to Parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels annually on the Record of Achievement. Parents/Carers will be informed by letter when their child's attendance falls below 95% and 92% via a letter sent by the Attendance Officer.

Reporting Pathway

97-95% Contact will be made by the class teacher

Below 95% Attendance letter 1 sent out to parents/carers.

Below 92% Attendance letter 2 sent to parents/carers.

Parents are invited into school for an attendance meeting with a member of SLT

Once parents have been invited in for attendance meetings, an Attendance Support Plan (ASP) will be put in place. A review meeting will be held every 2-3 weeks with parents until an improvement is seen.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-Time Absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
- Attending an interview.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare and unavoidable events, eg, the death or funeral of a close relative.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least three weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more details).
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an off-site approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school.
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration).
- Attending a provision arranged by the local authority.

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and the offences.

- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice may be implemented by the Headteacher.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

At Our Lady Immaculate, we firmly believe that regular attendance is crucial for a child's academic success, social development, and overall well-being. We adopt a multi-faceted approach to promote excellent attendance, combining positive reinforcement, proactive support, and, when necessary, formal interventions.

Celebrating Good Attendance

We aim to create a positive school culture where attendance is valued and celebrated. Our strategies include whole-school recognition:

- **Assembly Celebrations:** Good and improved attendance is regularly celebrated in our weekly assemblies. This includes acknowledging classes with the highest attendance.
- **Newsletters and Website:** Positive attendance messages and celebrations are regularly featured in our school newsletters and on the school website, ensuring parents are aware of and can celebrate these achievements.

Improving Attendance: Proactive Support and Intervention

We understand that there can be various reasons for absence and we are committed to working with families to overcome barriers to attendance. Our approach is supportive and graduated:

Early Intervention and Communication:

- **Daily Monitoring:** We rigorously monitor attendance daily, identifying any emerging patterns of absence or punctuality concerns.
- **First Day Calling:** Parents/carers are contacted on the first day of an unexplained absence to establish the reason and offer support.

- **Informal Meetings:** For emerging attendance concerns, a member of staff (e.g., class teacher) will arrange an informal meeting with parents/carers to discuss the issues, understand any underlying causes, and explore potential solutions. This may include discussing any medical needs, anxiety, or family circumstances impacting attendance.

Attendance Support Plans (ASP):

We work collaboratively with families to develop tailored support plans, which might include:

- Referral to internal school support
- Signposting to external agencies (e.g., school nurse, local authority services).
- Implementing specific strategies within school (e.g., buddy system, morning check-ins, soft start groups).

Parent/Carer Commitments in the plan might include ensuring the child attends school regularly and punctually, communicating reasons for absence promptly, ensuring sufficient sleep, or accompanying the child to school if needed.

School Commitments might include providing specific pastoral support, liaising with other agencies, offering differentiated learning, or implementing strategies to address any identified issues (e.g., bullying, anxiety).

Whole-School Ethos

Beyond specific strategies, our school fosters an ethos where every adult understands their role in promoting good attendance. This includes:

- Building strong, positive relationships with pupils and their families.
- Ensuring a safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment where all pupils feel a sense of belonging.
- Providing engaging and accessible lessons that motivate pupils to attend.
- Offering robust pastoral care and mental health support.

7. Supporting Pupils Who Are Absent or Returning to School

7.1 Pupils Absent Due to Complex Barriers to Attendance

Working closely with families is paramount. Our approach includes:

- **Open Communication:** Establishing a clear and consistent line of communication from the outset. This includes regular phone calls, emails, and face-to-face meetings to discuss the child's health, progress, and any challenges. We ensure parents feel heard and supported.

- **Joint Assessment:** Collaborating with parents to understand the root causes of absence. This involves gathering information about the child's medical condition, mental health struggles, or specific SEND needs, and how these impact their ability to attend school. We may encourage parents to provide medical evidence where appropriate or contact details of medical professionals who could support our understanding.
- **Co-production of the Plan:** Developing the ASP in partnership with parents, ensuring their insights and preferences are central to the plan. This fosters a sense of ownership and commitment.
- **Signposting Support:** Providing information on external support services, such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), local SEND support groups, or relevant charities, which can offer additional assistance to families.
- **Flexible Meetings:** Offering meeting times that are convenient for families, including virtual options where appropriate.

7.2 Pupils Absent Due to Mental or Physical Ill Health or SEND

Where a pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that are related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

The school makes reasonable adjustments to aid attendance, including:

- **Timetable changes:** Phased return, flexible hours, reduced subject load.
- **Learning environment:** Quiet spaces, optimal seating, more breaks.
- **Curriculum/Assessment:** Differentiated work, alternative assessments.
- **Communication:** Visual timetables, pre-warnings of changes, and key adults.

7.3 Pupils Returning to School After a Lengthy or Unavoidable Period of Absence

Initial Assessment and Communication (Pre-Return):

- **Contact with Family:** Early and ongoing communication with parents/carers to understand the reasons for absence, the pupil's current health/well-being, and any concerns.
- **Information Gathering:** Collect relevant information from medical professionals, therapists, or other agencies involved, with parental consent, to understand specific needs.
- **Pupil Voice:** Where appropriate, engage with the pupil to understand their feelings, anxieties, and what would help them feel safe and comfortable returning.

Developing a Reintegration Plan:

- Individualised Plan: Create a tailored Reintegration Plan collaboratively with the pupil (if appropriate), family, and relevant school staff (e.g., class teacher, SENCO). This plan will be a living document, regularly reviewed.
 - Phased Return: Implement a gradual return to school, starting with a reduced timetable (e.g., half-days, specific lessons) and slowly increasing attendance as the pupil adjusts. This minimises overwhelming the pupil.
 - Key Adult: Assign a designated key adult (e.g., form tutor, teaching assistant, pastoral lead) who will be the pupil's consistent point of contact, offering emotional support and a familiar face.
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8. Attendance Monitoring

Our school employs a robust system for monitoring and analyzing attendance and absence data, including punctuality:

- Live Data Monitoring: We utilise Arbor, which provides real-time attendance data.
- Weekly Reporting: Our Attendance Officer consistently monitors this data and produces a weekly report that is circulated to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Bi-weekly Intervention Meetings: The Data Officer and Senior Attendance Champion hold bi-weekly meetings to specifically identify and monitor children who require intervention due to attendance concerns.
- EWO Collaboration: The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) meets regularly with the core staff team to review attendance and persistent absence across all key student groups.

8.1 Monitoring Attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority levels through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort levels against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance.
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence.
- Conduct a thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

8.3 Using Data to Improve Attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups, or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis.
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has been identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below).
- Provide regular attendance reports to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

8.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is when a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is when a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school.
 - Listen and understand barriers to attendance.
 - Explain the available help.
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence.
 - Review any existing actions or interventions.
- These will be recorded on CPOMS.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant.
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5 above).
- Keep the EWO informed and respond to any advice.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and at a minimum of two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy.
- Behaviour policy.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
	Attending a place other than the school	
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience

D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
	Absent – leave of absence	
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
	Absent – other authorised reasons	

T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
	Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause	
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: In police detention; Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or; Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
	Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school	The pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of the session

	Administrative codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on the admission register	The pupil has not joined the school yet, but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 Attendance Letters

Below 95% Letter 1

Dear

I am writing to you today because {Pupil Name}'s attendance has fallen below **95%**, which means they've missed {#} days of school so far this academic year. We understand that sometimes children are genuinely unwell, and in those cases, keeping them home is absolutely the right decision for their health and the well-being of others.

However, medical guidance suggests that children with mild illnesses, such as a cough or a cold without a temperature, are often well enough to attend school. The NHS offers helpful guidance to support parents in these decisions, which you can find here: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#).

Missing school, even for a few days, can lead to pupils falling behind their classmates. At Our Lady Immaculate School, we are committed to minimising missed education as much as possible.

We believe that our community thrives when all our pupils are in school, on time, every day. This consistency helps us build essential life skills, foster lasting friendships, and prepare your child for future success.

We know that you play a significant role in {Pupil Name}'s attendance, and we would truly appreciate your help and support in ensuring they attend school every day. This will enable them to achieve the best possible outcomes. We want to partner with you to make this happen. If there's anything we can do to support you or your child, please don't hesitate to call or come in and meet with your child's class teacher. We recognise that every family's situation is unique.

Please be aware that if concerns about your child's attendance continue, we will be in touch again to request a meeting.

Kind regards



Below 92% Letter 2

Dear

Following my previous letter dated [date of first letter] regarding [Child's Name]'s attendance, I wanted to touch base with you again, as [Child's Name]'s attendance has not improved. Our records show that [Child's Name]'s attendance is currently at [insert per cent] ([#] days).

100-98%	Excellent - Children are accessing all learning opportunities
97-96%	Good - Very few learning opportunities are missed
	Risk of underachievement.
95-94%	Up to 10 days absent in an academic year
	High risk of underachievement.
93-92%	Up to 15 days absent in an academic year
	Severe risk of underachievement.
91-90%	Up to 19 days absent in an academic year
	Extreme risk of underachievement.
90%	Up to 22 days absent in an academic year

We know that pupils can fall behind when they miss school, and at Our Lady Immaculate School, we are committed to helping every child make the most of their learning. We believe our community is strongest when all pupils are in school, on time, every day, as this supports the development of life skills, friendships, and future opportunities.

To support [Child's Name] in improving attendance, we would like to invite you to a meeting at school to explore ways we can work together and produce a support plan. The meeting has been arranged for **[add date]** at **[add time]**. Please confirm this date or contact the school office to arrange an alternative time if needed.

I would greatly appreciate your involvement in this meeting so that together we can ensure that [Child's Name] is in school as much as possible and can achieve their full potential.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Persistent Lateness

Dear

I am writing to you regarding {Pupil Name}'s punctuality. It has been noted that they have been consistently late to school.

Being On Time: Every Minute Counts!

Being in school on time is just as important as attendance. Arriving punctually helps your child:

- **Start the Day Right:** Being on time ensures a calm and positive start to the school day, allowing your child to be ready to learn without feeling rushed or missing important instructions. The school gate opens at **8:35 am**.
- **Maximise Learning:** The first 20 minutes of the school day are often crucial for setting up learning activities and introducing new concepts. Missing these can make it harder for your child to keep up.
- **Develop Good Habits:** Punctuality is a vital life skill that benefits your child throughout their education and beyond. It promotes responsibility and respect for others' time.



We understand that mornings can be hectic, and we appreciate your efforts in ensuring your child arrives at school **before 8:50 am** to make the most of every learning opportunity.

Supercharge Your Mornings: 3 Tips for Punctuality

1. **Evening Prep is Key:** Prepare clothes, lunches, and school bags the night before to avoid morning stress.
2. **Build in Buffer Time:** Add an extra 10–15 minutes to your usual travel and getting-ready schedule to account for unexpected delays.
3. **Your Early Start:** Try waking up 15–30 minutes earlier than your child. Use this quiet time for your own preparation, helping you start the day feeling calm and ready.

If you would like to talk to us or need any support to help improve your family's attendance, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your support in helping {Pupil Name} develop strong habits and make the most of their learning.

Appendix 3 School Admin Staff Attendance Script

School Admin Staff Attendance Script

Key Information to Remember:

- **School Day Starts:** 8:50 AM (Reception), 8:50 AM (KS1 & KS2)
 - **Arrival Window:** 8:35 AM - 8:50 AM
 - **First Register Closes:** 9:00 AM (kept open until 9:20 AM)
 - **Second Register:** 13:25 PM
 - **Absence Reporting:** Call 0208 399 9854 before 9:00 AM on the first day of absence and each subsequent day.
 - **Emergency Contacts:** Ensure multiple emergency contacts are on file.
 - **Escalation:** If no contact can be made or support regarding an ongoing case of absence is required, talk to or transfer calls to the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher.
-

Scenario 1: Child Absent - No Contact from Parent on First Day

Form of Words:

"Good morning/afternoon, this is [Your Name] from Our Lady Immaculate School. I'm calling about **[Child's Name]** in [Class/Year Group]. They were not in school today, and we haven't yet received a call regarding their absence. Could you please let us know where **[Child's Name]** is and the reason for their absence today?"

If no answer, or unable to reach primary contact:

"We have tried to reach you regarding **[Child's Name]**'s absence today. As we haven't heard from you, we will now attempt to contact the emergency contacts we have on file. Please call the school office as soon as possible to let us know the reason for **[Child's Name]**'s absence."

If contact is made, and the parent gives a reason:

"Thank you for letting us know. Could you please confirm the reason for **[Child's Name]**'s absence and when you anticipate they will return to school?" *(Record details on the school system and identify the correct attendance code. If the reason is vague or concerning, escalate to SLT.)*

If no contact is made with the parent or emergency contacts, inform SLT immediately.

Scenario 2: Informing a Parent that an Absence Will Be Unauthorised

If a parent asks on the phone or in person if an absence will be marked as unauthorised:

"According to our school attendance policy, an absence is only authorised in specific circumstances. In this instance, the reason provided does not meet the criteria for an authorised absence as outlined in our policy. We always try to avoid marking absences as unauthorised, but we have to follow the DfE regulations and our school policy. Would you like to talk to the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher, who can discuss this further with you?"

Informing a parent that an absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Form of Words (after discussion and review by SLT):

"Good morning/afternoon, this is [Your Name] from Our Lady Immaculate School. I'm calling regarding [Child's Name]'s absence on [Date(s)]. We have reviewed the reason for the absence, and I need to inform you that, unfortunately, this absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**."

If the parent asks why:

"According to our school attendance policy, an absence is only authorised in specific circumstances, such as genuine illness or approved educational activities. In this instance, the reason provided does not meet the criteria for an authorised absence as outlined in our policy. We always try to avoid marking absences as unauthorised, but we have to follow the DfE regulations and our school policy. Would you like me to transfer you to the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher, who can discuss this further with you?"

Scenario 3: Explaining What Qualifies as an Authorised Absence

Form of Words:

"An **authorised absence** means the school has approved your child's absence for a valid reason. The most common reasons include:

- **Illness:** If your child is genuinely unwell, whether physically or mentally. We ask that you call us before 9:00 AM on the first day of absence to let us know.
- **Medical or Dental Appointments:** If these are made in advance and are unavoidable during school hours. We do encourage these appointments to be made

outside of school hours where possible, so your child misses the minimum amount of learning time.

- **Religious Observance:** If it's a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by your religious body.
- **Exceptional Circumstances:** These are rare and unavoidable events, such as the death or funeral of a close relative. Any request for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances needs to be submitted to the Headteacher in advance, using a request form from the school office, and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Family holidays during term time are generally not authorised.

We also have other reasons that are not classified as absences, like attending school-organised trips or approved educational activities off-site."

Scenario 4: Asking for Proof for Medical Absences (Including Appointments)

Form of Words (for absences longer than 5 days or concerns about authenticity):

"Good morning/afternoon, this is [Your Name] from Our Lady Immaculate School. I'm calling about **[Child's Name]**'s ongoing absence since [Start Date] due to illness. As **[Child's Name]** has now been absent for more than 5 days so we would need to request some medical evidence to authorise this extended absence. This could be a doctor's note, a copy of a prescription, an appointment card, or any other appropriate form of evidence. Could you please provide us with this documentation at your earliest convenience?"

Form of Words (for medical appointments, when a parent has called in advance):

"Thank you for letting us know about **[Child's Name]**'s medical appointment on [Date] at [Time]. Could you please provide us with proof of the appointment, such as an appointment card or a letter, for our records? This helps us to correctly authorise the absence."

Scenario 5: Parent Enquiring About Taking Holiday During Term Time

Form of Words:

"Please be aware that the school policy, in line with DfE regulations, states that **headteachers can only grant leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances**. Family holidays are generally **not considered exceptional circumstances**.

If you still wish to request a leave of absence, you will need to complete a **Leave of Absence Request Form**. These forms are available from the school office. You should submit the form as far in advance as possible, ideally at least three weeks before the requested absence. The Headteacher will then review your request on an individual basis, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances you provide.

If the absence is not authorised by the Headteacher, and your child is still taken out of school, this absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**."

General Reminders for Staff:

- **Be Polite and Empathetic:** Always maintain a professional and supportive tone.
- **Refer to Policy:** When explaining decisions, refer back to school policy and DfE regulations where appropriate.
- **Escalate When Necessary:** Don't hesitate to transfer calls to the Headteacher, or Assistant Headteachers for more complex situations or ongoing issues.
- **Record Everything:** Document all communications and actions on the school system.

Appendix 4: Attendance Support Plan Template

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School

Individual Attendance Plan

Name of pupil		
Year group/class		
Staff supporting with attendance plan and roles		
Date plan was agreed		
Attendance history		
Include details of attendance percentages (broken down by attendance code where appropriate), details of trends or patterns over time and any historical factors that might be relevant.		
Current risk factors/current barriers to attendance		
To help with this, it might be useful to carry out an individual attendance audit.		
Academic targets	Milestones	Date each milestone achieved
Target 1 - add specific target here	For each target provide a number of measurable milestones •	
Target 2 - add specific target here	•	
Target 2 - add specific target here	•	

Strategies to be implemented by the school		
Details of strategy (including date commenced)	Purpose of implementing strategy	Member of staff responsible

E.g. daily wake-up calls for two weeks, starting from 16 th October	E.g. to establish an effective morning routine	E.g. parent support worker to carry out calls
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Expectations of the pupil (if Appropriate)

Details of expectations	How has this been communicated to the pupil?	Monitoring arrangements (who by and when?)
E.g. set an alarm for 7 a.m. every day	E.g. discussion with attendance officer and ongoing reminders	E.g. attendance officer will monitor this daily

Expectations of the family

Details of expectations	How has this been communicated to the pupil's family?	Monitoring arrangements (who by and when?)
E.g. for parents to phone school before 9 a.m. to report the reason for any absence	E.g. expectations explained during face-to-face attendance meeting and agreed by parents	E.g. attendance officer will monitor this daily

External support

Details of agency/partner	Support being offered	Date support commenced
E.g. social care	E.g. Early Help referral has been made as mother is reporting that she feels overwhelmed	E.g. referral made 2 nd November - currently awaiting first contact

Record of attendance reviewing meeting	
Date of review	
Individuals present	
Situation since last review	
Milestones achieved since last review	
Areas discussed	
Outcome of meeting (tick as appropriate)	☐ Continue with initial plan ☐ Continue plan with new or supplementary strategies added ☐ Escalate attendance plan to next stage
Date of next review	

Appendix 5 Absence Flower Chart

