



WOODMANSEY CE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Building Strong
Foundations



Unlocking
Potential



Inspiring a
Generation

Attendance Policy

Written by: J. Williams

Approved by: Governing Body

Date: August 2026

Next Review: August 2027

1. Aims, Christian Ethos and Vision

At Woodmansey CE Primary School, regular attendance is understood as both an educational entitlement and a safeguarding priority. Our Christian values call us to treat every child and family with respect, compassion, hope and dignity. We listen carefully, seek to understand barriers, offer practical help and work in partnership so that pupils feel safe, known, welcomed and able to flourish.

This policy supports our school vision: 'Building Strong Foundations, Unlocking Potential, Inspiring a Generation.' Secure attendance builds the foundations for belonging, relationships and learning; unlocks access to support and opportunity; and helps every child make strong educational progress and prepare confidently for the future.

Our aims are to:

- promote a whole-school culture in which attendance and punctuality are everyone's responsibility;
- set high, fair and inclusive expectations for every pupil while recognising that some children need additional support or reasonable adjustments;
- identify unexplained, irregular, persistent, severe or prolonged absence quickly and respond without delay;
- understand and remove barriers through a support-first, child-centred and family-focused approach;
- make explicit the links between adversity, mental health, safeguarding risk, exploitation, attendance, wellbeing and educational progress;
- maintain accurate legal registers, use the national attendance codes correctly and protect children who are absent from education; and
- use formal or legal intervention only when support is not appropriate, has not succeeded or has not been engaged with, and where escalation is likely to improve attendance.

2. Scope and Statutory Framework

This policy applies to all pupils registered at Woodmansey CE Primary School, including children below compulsory school age while they are on roll. It should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, inclusion, SEND, medical conditions, behaviour and data-protection arrangements.

The policy has been updated for the statutory position at September 2026 and has regard to:

- the Education Act 1996, including sections 7, 19 and 444;
- the Education Act 2002, including the safeguarding duty in section 175;
- the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- the Equality Act 2010 and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils;
- the Children and Families Act 2014, including duties relating to SEND and medical conditions;
- the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended;
- DfE statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026);
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026);
- Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (September 2025); and
- relevant DfE guidance on mental health, medical conditions, children unable to attend because of health needs, remote education and alternative provision.

Legal duty. Parents must ensure that a child of compulsory school age receives a suitable full-time education. Where a child is registered at school, the parent must ensure the child attends regularly. The school and local authority have corresponding duties to safeguard the child's right to education and to support improved attendance.

3. Key Principles and Definitions

Regular attendance: attendance at every session for the full duration of that session, except where a statutory reason permits absence.

Persistent absence: missing 10% or more of possible school sessions for any reason. This is broadly equivalent to one day or more a fortnight across a full school year.

Severe absence: missing 50% or more of possible sessions. Pupils who are absent more often than they are present are a top priority for intensive, coordinated support.

Prolonged absence: a continuous or extended period away from education. It may arise from health, safeguarding, family or other complex circumstances and requires active planning for education, contact and reintegration.

Unexplained absence: an unexpected absence for which the school has not yet established a reason. It is followed up promptly and recorded initially as Code N, then amended to the correct code as soon as possible and within five school days.

Authorised absence: absence that meets a statutory category or leave of absence granted by the Headteacher in advance where permitted. A parent's explanation alone does not automatically authorise absence.

Unauthorised absence: absence without leave, or where the reason is unknown or does not meet a statutory authorised category.

Parent: for attendance purposes, includes a natural parent, any person with parental responsibility and any person who has day-to-day care of the child.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- recognises attendance as central to the school's ethos, safeguarding, inclusion and improvement work;
- ensures that school leaders comply with the law and have regard to statutory guidance;
- approves, publishes and reviews this policy, ensuring it is accessible to pupils, families and staff;
- reviews attendance information at least termly, including persistent and severe absence and the experience of vulnerable groups;
- provides constructive support and challenge, ensures sufficient resources and training, and considers whether actions are effective and equitable; and
- appoints a link governor for attendance where appropriate.

Headteacher and Senior Attendance Champion

The Headteacher, Mr J. Williams, is the school's Senior Attendance Champion and can be contacted through the school office. The Senior Attendance Champion:

- sets the strategic direction and maintains effective systems for promoting, monitoring and improving attendance;
- ensures staff understand their responsibilities and receive appropriate training;
- uses data to identify patterns, priorities and pupils needing early or intensive support;
- ensures that barriers within school are addressed and that reasonable adjustments are made where required;
- leads or oversees meetings with pupils, parents, the local authority School Attendance Support Team and wider services;
- decides whether to grant leave of absence, applying the statutory criteria to each request individually;
- ensures the attendance and admission registers are accurate, electronic and lawfully maintained; and
- authorises referrals for formal or legal intervention where appropriate, proportionate and consistent with the local code of conduct.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- reviews unexplained, repeated and prolonged absence where there may be a safeguarding concern;
- ensures the school's response considers abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, child sexual or criminal exploitation, trafficking, forced marriage, radicalisation, harmful peer influence, missing episodes and other extra-familial harm;
- coordinates information with children's social care, police, health, the local authority, social workers and other partners; and
- ensures immediate action is taken where a child may be at risk of significant harm or is missing.

School Office and Attendance Staff

- take and reconcile registers, record late arrivals and maintain accurate reasons and evidence for absence;
- operate first-day contact and escalate non-response or concern promptly;
- monitor daily and weekly patterns, produce reports and alert senior leaders to emerging concerns;
- keep a clear record of contact, support, meetings, agreed actions and outcomes; and
- make required attendance, sickness and pupil-movement returns to the local authority.

All School Staff

- take registers accurately at the required time and never pre-populate them;
- create a calm, safe, inclusive and welcoming environment that encourages attendance;
- notice changes in attendance, punctuality, presentation, behaviour, wellbeing or engagement and report concerns;
- listen to pupils without judgement and pass safeguarding information to the DSL; and
- support agreed attendance plans and reintegration consistently.

Pupils

- attend every session on time, ready to learn, unless there is a permitted reason for absence;
- speak to a trusted adult about worries or barriers that make attendance difficult; and
- take part in support and reintegration plans in a way appropriate to their age and understanding.

Parents and Carers

- ensure their child attends every day the school is open, arrives on time and remains for the full session;
- provide and keep up to date all home addresses, parent details, telephone numbers, emergency contacts and relevant information;
- contact the school as early as possible on the first day of an unexpected absence, giving the specific reason, and provide updates if the absence continues;
- make routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible and provide appointment details when requested;
- request any leave of absence in advance and not make travel arrangements before a decision is given;
- work openly with the school and support services, attend meetings and carry out agreed actions; and
- tell the school promptly about health, SEND, mental-health, bullying, family, housing, transport, caring or safeguarding issues affecting attendance.

Local Authority and Partner Agencies

The school works with East Riding of Yorkshire Council's School Attendance Support Team and Education Welfare Service through advice, targeting support meetings, joint plans, children-missing-education procedures, section 19 arrangements and, where necessary, legal intervention. Health, SEND, early help, family help, children's social care, police, youth justice and voluntary services may contribute according to the child's needs.

5. School Day, Punctuality and Registration

Point in the day	Expectation and registration action
8:40am	School doors open. Pupils may enter and settle; staff are available in classrooms.
8:50am	The school day and morning session begin. The register is taken at the same time for all pupils.
8:50–9:20am	A pupil arriving after the register starts but before it closes is recorded as late (Code L) and must report to the school office with a parent/carer where practicable.
After 9:20am	The morning register is closed. A pupil arriving later is recorded using Code U unless another absence code more accurately describes a permitted reason.
1:10pm	The afternoon session begins and the register is taken.
1:10–1:30pm	A pupil arriving after the register starts but before it closes is recorded as late (Code L).
After 1:30pm	The afternoon register is closed. Code U, or another appropriate absence code, is used.
3:30pm	The normal school day ends.

Registers will remain open for the same stated period in each equivalent session and never for longer than 30 minutes. Patterns of lateness are monitored because repeated late arrival disrupts learning, can indicate wider barriers and may contribute to the national penalty-notice threshold when recorded as unauthorised Code U.

6. Reporting and Following Up Absence

Parent reporting

Parents must contact the school office as early as possible and before the morning register closes on the first day of unexpected absence. They should give the child's name, class, specific reason for absence, likely duration and any relevant safeguarding or health information. Where absence continues, parents should maintain contact and provide an update after three days or sooner if requested.

First-day response to unexplained absence

If a pupil is not present and no satisfactory reason is known, the school will act promptly. The response will be proportionate to the child's circumstances and known risk and may include:

- checking the register, late-arrival record, messages, planned appointments, sibling attendance and information from staff;
- contacting parents and carers using all available telephone numbers and agreed communication routes;
- contacting emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached;
- speaking with the DSL, social worker, youth offending team worker or other involved professional;
- making a home visit or asking the local authority or police to assist where necessary and safe; and
- making an immediate referral to children's social care and/or the police where there is reason to believe the child is in immediate danger, missing or at risk of significant harm.

Recording the outcome

Where the reason is not known when the register closes, Code N is used temporarily. The school will continue enquiries and amend the register to the correct code as soon as the reason is established and no later than five school days after the session. If no reason can be established within that period, Code O is used.

7. Attendance and Admission Registers

- The school keeps electronic admission and attendance registers in accordance with the 2024 Regulations.
- The attendance register is taken at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session, at the same time for all registered pupils.
- Each pupil is recorded as present, attending an approved educational activity, absent with the appropriate reason, unable to attend for a statutory reason, or using an administrative code.
- A pupil's name is added to and removed from the admission register only in accordance with the statutory grounds and required local-authority notifications. Off-rolling is never acceptable.
- Every register entry is retained for six years. Any amendment preserves the original entry and records the amendment, reason, date and person making it.
- The school makes admission/deletion, attendance and sickness returns to the local authority as required and shares daily attendance data with the DfE through the school's management information system.

A summary of the national attendance codes is provided in Appendix 1. Staff responsible for registers will use the current statutory definitions and DfE guidance rather than local or historic codes.

8. Authorised Absence and Leave of Absence

Illness and medical appointments

Code I is used where a pupil is unable to attend because of physical or mental illness. Routine medical evidence is not required for every illness. The school may ask for reasonable evidence where there are genuine grounds to doubt the reason, where absence is prolonged or repeated, or where evidence is needed to arrange suitable support. Evidence may include appointment details, prescriptions or communication from an appropriate professional; it need not always be a GP letter.

Routine appointments should be made outside school time where possible. When this is not possible, pupils should attend before and/or after the appointment. Code M is used only for the time reasonably required for a medical or dental appointment.

Religious observance

Code R is used for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs. Additional time for travel or family celebration is not automatically authorised and requires a separate application for exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances

The Headteacher may grant leave of absence in advance only where permitted by the 2024 Regulations. Requests are considered individually, taking account of the facts, circumstances and relevant background. No event automatically qualifies and no blanket policy will be applied. Where leave is granted, the Headteacher determines the authorised duration.

A holiday or other absence for leisure and recreation is not generally an exceptional circumstance. Leave cannot be granted retrospectively. An absence for a holiday that has not been granted is recorded as Code G.

Other statutory categories

Other authorised or attending categories may include a regulated performance, interview, temporary part-time timetable, Traveller absence, suspension or permanent exclusion, dual registration, local-authority provision, approved off-site education, educational visits and approved sporting activities. The criteria for the relevant national code must be fully met.

9. Health, SEND, Mental Health and Part-time Timetables

The same ambition for regular attendance applies to pupils with physical or mental ill health, medical conditions, SEND or disabilities. The route to achieving that ambition may need to be personalised. The school will listen to the pupil and family, consider professional advice, put appropriate support and reasonable adjustments in place, and review their impact.

- Support may include a trusted adult, check-ins, adjustments to arrival or transitions, safe spaces, changes to the learning environment, anti-bullying action, SEND support, an individual healthcare plan, phased reintegration, mentoring or coordinated multi-agency work.
- Normal but difficult emotions do not automatically mean a pupil should remain away from school. Sensitive attendance, with support, can reduce anxiety and prevent avoidance becoming entrenched.
- A prolonged absence can itself heighten anxiety, weaken peer relationships, reduce confidence and make return more difficult. Plans will therefore maintain appropriate contact, belonging, learning and a clear route back.
- Where health needs are likely to cause 15 school days of absence, consecutively or cumulatively, the school will make the required sickness return and work with the local authority on suitable education under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.
- Remote education is not an alternative to attendance. It may be used only in exceptional circumstances, as a last resort, for a limited period and as part of a plan to reintegrate the pupil into face-to-face education.

Temporary part-time timetables

A part-time timetable for a pupil of compulsory school age is exceptional, temporary and time-limited. It must be in the pupil's best interests, agreed with the parent, set out the sessions the pupil is expected to attend, have a clear objective and end date, be reviewed regularly and increase attendance towards full-time education as soon as possible. It must not be used to manage behaviour, avoid exclusion, respond to unmet SEND needs without support, or provide a long-term reduced entitlement. Non-attendance at agreed sessions is recorded using Code C2 only where all statutory criteria are met.

10. Safeguarding, Exploitation, ACEs and Children Missing Education

Being in school is an important protective factor. Unexplained, repeated, persistent, severe or prolonged absence may indicate abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, trafficking, forced marriage, radicalisation, harmful peer or adult influence, caring responsibilities, homelessness, poverty, family crisis or other adversity. Children missing education can be at particular risk.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma can affect a child's emotional regulation, trust, relationships, physical and mental health, readiness to learn and capacity to attend. Mental-health difficulties may contribute to absence; absence can also worsen mental health, reduce access to trusted adults and services, and increase exposure to risk or exploitation.

These relationships are not assumed to be the same for every child. The school will listen, assess the individual context and respond to need rather than label or blame.

- All repeated and prolonged absences will be considered through both attendance and safeguarding lenses.
- The DSL will decide whether early help, family help, a safeguarding referral, police involvement or another statutory response is required.
- The school will inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker of unexplained absence and work jointly with involved professionals.
- The school will carry out rapid reasonable enquiries when a pupil's whereabouts or education is uncertain and will continue to work with the local authority after a children-missing-education referral.
- A pupil will be removed from the admission register only when a statutory ground is fully met and all required joint enquiries and notifications have been completed.

11. Support-first Graduated Response

Attendance support starts as soon as a concern or pattern emerges; the school does not wait for a pupil to become persistently absent. The level of help increases with need and risk. The pupil's voice, the family's knowledge and evidence about what is working will shape the plan.

Stage	School response	Typical evidence and review
1. Expect and monitor	A welcoming culture, clear expectations, accurate registers, daily follow-up, praise for improvement and routine data review.	Daily registers; punctuality; emerging patterns; communication with families.
2. Listen and understand	A conversation with the pupil and parent to understand in-school and out-of-school barriers; immediate adjustments and agreed actions.	Attendance conversation; barrier analysis; child's views; short action plan and review date.
3. Facilitate and formalise support	Targeted pastoral, SEND, health or family support; referrals; multi-agency plan; attendance contract or education supervision order where voluntary support is not sufficient.	Written plan with named lead, responsibilities, measurable goals, review cycle and contingency action.
4. Enforce where necessary	Notice to Improve, penalty notice or prosecution only where support is not appropriate, has not worked or has not been engaged with, and legal action is proportionate and likely to improve attendance.	Chronology of contact and support; equality and safeguarding consideration; local-authority decision and code of conduct.

If one form of support is refused or ineffective, the school and partners will review why, adjust the approach and offer further opportunities where meaningful. Where absence intensifies, the school will involve the local authority and wider services without delay. Safeguarding action is not postponed while attendance support is attempted.

12. Persistent, Severe and Prolonged Absence

Persistent absence

Where a pupil misses 10% or more of possible sessions, the school and local authority are expected to provide additional targeted support. The school will identify the pattern and reasons, meet the pupil and parent, agree a written plan, remove in-school barriers, connect the family with wider services where needed and review attendance frequently.

Severe absence

Where a pupil misses 50% or more of possible sessions, the case is a top priority. A senior leader will coordinate intensive, multi-agency support and ensure educational provision, safeguarding, SEND, health and family needs are considered together. Where severe unauthorised absence continues after appropriate support and provision, the school and local authority will consider whether this may constitute neglect and whether a children's social care assessment is required.

Prolonged absence and reintegration

For a pupil absent for a prolonged period, the school will maintain safe and proportionate contact, keep the pupil connected to the school community, support continuity of education, coordinate with professionals and plan return early. Reintegration may include a named adult, pre-return visits, updated risk or healthcare planning, curriculum catch-up, reasonable adjustments, peer support and a temporary phased return where justified. Plans will be reviewed with the pupil and family and will avoid overwhelming the child or creating an indefinite reduced entitlement.

13. Formal and Legal Intervention

Legal intervention protects a child's right to education; it is not a substitute for understanding barriers or providing suitable support. The school will work with East Riding of Yorkshire Council and follow the local code of conduct. Options may include an attendance contract, Education Supervision Order, Notice to Improve, penalty notice or prosecution.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

- The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The sessions may be consecutive or non-consecutive, may include a combination of Codes G, N, O and U, and may span terms or school years.
- When the threshold is met, the school must consider the individual case. It will consider whether support is appropriate, whether support has been provided and engaged with, whether a penalty notice is likely to change behaviour, and any Equality Act duties.
- Where support is appropriate but has not worked or been engaged with, a Notice to Improve will usually provide a final opportunity to improve over a period of three to six weeks, in line with the local process.
- Support may not be appropriate for an unauthorised term-time holiday. East Riding's current local arrangements provide for referral where there are five or more consecutive days of unauthorised term-time leave, subject to individual consideration.
- A first penalty notice to a parent for a particular child within a rolling three-year period is £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second notice to the same parent for the same child within three years is £160, payable within 28 days, with no reduced rate.
- Only two penalty notices may be issued to the same parent for the same child within three years. If the national threshold is met for a third or subsequent time, a further notice cannot be issued and the local authority will consider alternative action, which may include prosecution.
- Penalty notices are considered per parent, per child. Non-payment may lead to prosecution for the original attendance offence.

These amounts and processes reflect the position at the policy date. The school will apply any later statutory changes or revised East Riding code of conduct from the date they take effect and will update this policy where necessary.

14. Monitoring, Analysis and Evaluation

Attendance is monitored continuously and used to improve provision, not simply to identify sanctions. The school will:

- review present, absent, unexplained and late pupils every day and follow up concerns;

- review individual and cohort patterns at least weekly, including days, sessions, subjects, transitions, codes and recurring reasons;
- identify pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence before thresholds are reached;
- analyse half-termly and termly trends by year group and, where numbers permit safe and meaningful analysis, by SEND, disability, disadvantaged status, social worker involvement, young carer status, ethnicity, sex and other relevant characteristics;
- compare current, historic and national/local information while avoiding simplistic targets or comparisons that overlook individual context;
- evaluate whether interventions improve attendance, wellbeing, safety, belonging and educational engagement, and revise them where they do not;
- report to the Governing Body at least termly on attendance, persistent and severe absence, punctuality, vulnerable groups, support, legal intervention and impact; and
- use praise and recognition sensitively, celebrating improvement and contribution without disadvantaging pupils whose illness, disability, faith or other protected circumstances affect attendance.

15. Information Sharing and Record Keeping

The school records and shares attendance information lawfully, fairly and securely. Relevant information may be shared with the DfE, local authority, other schools, health, children's social care, police and partner agencies where required by law or necessary to safeguard a child, provide support or perform a public task. Data-protection law is not a barrier to proportionate safeguarding information sharing. Families will be treated with dignity and only information needed for the purpose will be used.

16. Contacts, Related Policies and Review

Contact	Details
Senior Attendance Champion	Mr J. Williams, Headteacher
Day-to-day attendance contact	School Office
Telephone	01482 862186
Email	woodmansey.primary@eastriding.gov.uk
Address	Woodmansey CE Primary School, Hull Road, Woodmansey, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU17 0TH
East Riding Education Welfare Service	(01482) 392146 education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk

The policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, local procedures or the school's context changes. Pupil and parent views will inform review. The latest version will be published on the school website and communicated to families and staff.