



Whole School Attendance Policy

Updating Policy Procedure

When a policy is due for review it will be emailed to the reviewer who will revise and highlight those updates and return the policy in full with the highlighted updates back to the Policy Co-Ordinator.

When a policy reviewer becomes aware of **any updates** they will ask the Policy Co-Ordinator to email the policy to them and follow the above procedures.

A policy is a statement of intent and the guidelines we follow, that is adopted by the Fortuna and Athena Federation's Governing Body.

Policy Reviewed by:

Craig Chaplin – Fortuna School

Updated on:

June 2026

Date to be reviewed:

May – July 2028

Date Ratified at FGM:

13th July 2026

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with:

Education Act 1996 (Sections 7, 436A, 444, 444A and 444B)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

Equality Act 2010

DfE Guidance: Children Missing Education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (2025)

DfE Guidance: Keeping children safe in education (2025)

DfE Guidance: SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015)

DfE Guidance: Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2015)

DfE Guidance: Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (2026)

DfE Guidance: Working together to improve school attendance (2026)

Lincolnshire Attendance: Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

ACCESSABILITY POLICY
ADMISSION POLICY
BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY
CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY
EXCLUSION AND SUSPENSION POLICY
HOME VISITS POLICY

Attendance Champion

The named Attendance Champion for Fortuna is Craig Chaplin.

Mission Statement

The Fortuna School is committed to providing a full and impactful education for all pupils. The school sincerely believes that all pupils benefit from the education provided when they attend school regularly. To this end we will do as much as we can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

It is recognised that:

All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.

No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.

In the first instance, it is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents/carers may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents/carers, work in partnership with families and external agencies to address these challenges.

The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence.

It is also recognised that due to the large catchment area of Fortuna School (over 5000km²) and reliance on local authority transport, the school have reduced direct contact with parents and carers. For this reason, it is important to consider how best to establish and maintain good communication between home and school.

Letters will be regularly sent home to parents/carers updating them of their child's individual attendance level. The school will also ensure parents/carers are informed of any referrals to another agency regarding attendance.

The Attendance Champion holds regular meetings with the school's Education Welfare Officer who will support action planning where there are concerns relating to attendance. Should these issues not be resolved in a timely manner, the school will adopt a systematic approach to support parents/carers and young people to achieve improved school attendance.

Attendance Bandings

The Government defines 'Persistent Absence' (PA) as:

- > Any student who has an attendance level of 90% or less is classed as a 'Persistent Absentee'.
- > Any student who misses more than 10% (19 school days) schooling within and across the academic year for whatever reason (either authorised or unauthorised). Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any learner's educational prospects and we need parent/carer's full support and co-operation to challenge this.

The Government defines 'Severe Absence' (SA) as:

- > Any student who is missing 50% or more of their education.

In line with paragraph 87 of Working Together to Improve School Attendance, if following appropriate support there is not an improvement in attendance the school will make a referral to social care as this may constitute neglect.

Parents/Carers Responsibility

To honour the home/school agreement signed on admission.

To ensure that their child attends school every day.

To ensure that their child arrives at school within the registration window between 8:30 and 9:15am. N.B. The length of this period is due to the exceptionally large catchment area of Fortuna.

Ensure medical appointments are made outside of the school day where possible.

To notify the school and SEN Transport (if used) in advance of any planned absence.

To contact the school before 9am if pupils are unwell and unable to attend school.

To ensure holidays are only taken during school holiday time, not term time.

To engage in the 'Attend Framework' process if required to do so.

School Responsibility

The school office will telephone home to ascertain reasons for an absence if no one has called from home by 9:15am.

Late arrivals after the close of register at 9:15am will be registered with the office on arrival before joining class, in case of a fire or other emergency.

The Attendance Champion will track absence and meet regularly with the senior leadership team (SLT) to discuss concerns. Next steps will be agreed and actioned.

The school will utilise the 'Attend Framework' to identify underlying reasons for absence and enable professionals to engage the pupil in a collaborative approach to positively affect their attendance.

To ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance using school registers (twice a day).

SEN and Attendance

As a specialist SEMH setting the Fortuna School will seek to work together with families to support a good level of attendance and address persistent absenteeism when this occurs. The school will also work alongside a range of appropriate professional including:

Lincolnshire Attendance Team

Social care professionals (e.g. social worker, early help workers)

SEND Caseworkers

Mental health professionals (MHST, CAHMS, psychologists)

Medical professionals (School nurse, paediatricians, GP)

Virtual Schools for Children in Care

Education Transport Services

Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate with consideration of individual needs.

After appropriate consultation, the school will determine what constitutes a reasonable adjustment.

Some adjustments may be indefinite to meet an ongoing need, whilst others such as part-time timetables will be time bound and 4-weekly reviewed. These will be documented in either a School Attendance Panel record or a Health Meeting record.

Registration

The school register is completed by the school office as children arrive at school by an office administrator.

The school uses the national attendance and absence codes in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The Headteacher is responsible for determining whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

The school register closes at 9:15 for morning sessions and 13:00 for afternoon sessions.

Attendance Step-by Step

The school will use the following protocol in the event of a pupil been absent from school:

Time Frame	Who/When	Record	Notes
------------	----------	--------	-------



Day 1 and ongoing	Office after 9am	Integris Register & CPOMS if reason for concern.	To ascertain reason for absence. If no answer, follow up with a call later in the day. If still no answer, send an email reminding of the need to notify school in the event of absence and requesting the parent/carer contact the school.
Day 2	Class or pastoral staff on the same day	CPOMS	To call to see when they will be returning. Is there anything the student is worried about? Give the family an overview of what has been covered in the classroom.
Day 3	CAFO / Attendance Champion	CPOMS	Call to discuss issues around attendance. If the whereabouts of the child are unknown / the absence is unexplained / the pupil is vulnerable a home visit to be carried out.
Day 5	Welfare call to speak to child	CPOMS CME referral if appropriate	A welfare call/home visit to ensure we have spoken to the child directly. Referral as 'Missing in Education' if appropriate.
Day 10	Office / Attendance Champion	To complete a PNAR form.	After 10 consecutive days of unauthorised non-attendance a PNAR survey is completed online and a SAP meeting to be booked.
Day 15	EWO/CAFO	CPOMS	To visit the students' home and meet with the family to discuss attendance and consider any other barriers.

Absence Monitoring and Intervention Thresholds

The school office will record the reason for absence in all instances. This will be recorded in the school register and CPOMS system.

On the day of absence an automatic CPOMS alert will be sent to the Attendance Champion who will follow up accordingly (see Attendance Step-by-Step) and record this as an action to the alert on CPOMS.

Formal attendance monitoring occurs half termly. The half termly and year to date attendance data for all children is collated and contextualised by the Attendance Champion. There will be appropriate analysis of attendance to ensure the action taken is proportional and contextualised.

There will be specific monitoring and analysis of the attendance of the following vulnerable and minority groups:

Free School Meals
Children in Care



Vulnerable pupils (Team Around Family / Child in Need / Child Protection)

Transport-related absence

Minority groups (e.g gender, ethnicity, traveller, English as an additional language, young carers)

Persistent absence

Severe absence

The school will act on absence at the thresholds set out in the table below:

Above 95%	Less than 6 days absence a year: Pupils with this attendance are well placed to make good academic and personal progress.	No action required
Less than 95%	Less than 10 days absence a year: Pupils are likely to make good progress with their learning and personal development.	A letter will be sent to parents/carers to make them aware attendance has dropped below 95%. This letter will indicate whether this is predominately due to authorised or unauthorised absence.
Less than 90%	19 days of absence a year: This is the equivalent of missing a month of education and is likely to impact progress in Math's and English. It will be difficult for children to catch up on missed learning.	An escalation letter will be sent that ensures parents/carers are aware of their child's current level of absence and the need to act in order to improve attendance.
Where there are concerns about persistent absenteeism	It will be very difficult for children to keep up with learning and achieve their best.	When there are significant concerns about persistent absenteeism the school will invite parents/carers and other relevant professionals to participate in a School Attendance Panel. Should attendance continue to decrease the school will liaise with the EWO and discuss appropriate action. This may include a Penalty Notice. In cases of absenteeism for medical reasons the school will carry out a Health Meeting to discuss barriers to attendance and appropriate support.

School Attendance Panel and Health Meetings

Parents/carers and relevant professionals will be invited to take part in a school attendance panel (SAP) when persistent absenteeism is a significant concern. The purpose of these panels is to explore the reasons for low-attendance and agree upon an action plan that will improve attendance.

An initial meeting will take place and there will be a discussion around what is working well in regard to attendance, what concerns the school has and what needs to happen. This discussion will then inform an action plan. The action plan will be reviewed and amended each half term (shorter review periods may be required where significant concerns around attendance exist). SAPs will close when an agreed threshold of attendance (typically 95%) is met for two consecutive half terms.

If there is a lack of engagement from parents/carers with the SAP, these will be carried out in their absence and a copy of the SAP action plan will be communicated by post or email.

All SAP action plans will be shared with the EWO, who may advise the school of additional support and action that should be considered.

In instances of absenteeism due to medical reasons the school will request a Health Meeting. To support this meeting the EWO may request information from medical professionals and a letter would be provided to request consent for this.

Penalty Notice

Should a School Attendance Panel not result in an improvement in attendance the school's Attendance Lead will consult with the Education Welfare Officer and the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct to determine whether a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

In the event of poor attendance and a lack of engagement with the School Attendance Panel, such as not attending the panel meetings, the school may request that the Local Authority consider issuing a Penalty Notice following the second cycle.

A 'Notice to Improve' letter will be issued after all the support has been offered and a child's school attendance has not improved. Copies of the 'Notice to Improve' letters will be forwarded to the Local Authority.

'Notice to improve' as outlined in the [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Other Action

If following the above, attendance does not improve, the school will follow local guidelines and the following additional courses of action will be considered:

Education Supervision Orders

Attendance Prosecution

Parenting Orders

Children Missing Education (CME)

The school follows the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Panel (LSCP) procedures and will make enquiries into the location of students with continuous unauthorised absence or those who fail to return from leave of absence during term time.

After 3-days of unexplained absence or where there is concern about the authenticity of the reason provided, the school will conduct a home visit and ascertain if the child is still living at the address on record. After 5 days of unexplained absence the school will complete a 'School Risk Assessment

for Child Missing Education (CME)' and forward to the CME Officer at the Local Authority. The school will also notify the EWO. The CME risk assessment is reported via Perspective Lite.

Pupils Not Attending Regularly (PNAR)

The Fortuna School will inform the Local Authority of any Pupil Not Attending Regularly (PNAR). The definition of PNAR is a student that has been absent for 10 consecutive school days with either no reason provided or where school has not accepted the reason provided.

PNAR referrals should be made using the link below:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-attendance/pupil-attendance/3>

The school should notify the local authority when the pupil returns to school, the Local Authority should be made aware by email (attendance@Lincolnshire.gov.uk) with the subject heading 'PNAR Child Returned'. The email should contain the child's name, date of birth and date of return.

Sickness Returns

Schools are required to notify the local authority when a pupil has 15 days of illness (Coded I) within an academic year.

The Attendance Champion will carry out this notification or delegate this task to the office administrator responsible for the attendance register.

Sickness returns should be made using the link below:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/xfp/form/980>

Reduced Timetables

All children are entitled to attend school full time, but in some circumstances it may be appropriate for children to attend school on a temporarily reduced time table. Where a temporary reduced timetable results in a child attending school less than 30 hours per week (as is the normal hours in our SEMH provision), the school will follow statutory guidance and local protocols which can be found on Perspective Lite. Key points to note are:

A reduced timetable can only be granted to meet the needs of the child.

A reduced timetable must be agreed by parents/carers (requires signed consent)

The local authority must be informed of reduced timetables.

Social workers, SEND caseworkers and in the case of children in care the virtual school must be made aware of the reduced timetable.

Reduced timetables are to be coded as C2 when not due in school.

A pastoral support plan must be in place if the reduced timetable is due to behavioural, social or emotional needs (the school will use the SAP process for this).

Reduced Timetables are reviewed at least every 4 weeks and all professionals involved have to agree and support this interim plan.

Reintegration Following Absence

Following prolonged absence, the school will work with the pupils, families and professionals to develop a supported reintegration plan to enable a successful return to full-time education.

A school attendance panel framework will be used to support a return to school with consideration of the individual circumstances. The school will consider where appropriate:

Graduated return arrangements
Reasonable adaptations
Action within the Emotionally Based School Avoidance toolkit
Therapeutic / Mental Health referrals
The use of bespoke incentives
Ensure support is in place for young carers
Recommendations from professionals

Request for Leave of Absence

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated in August 2024 and are set out in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024). The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations state that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher can determine the length of the authorised absence and whether the absence is authorised. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant or unavoidable.

There is no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday. Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence are advised to complete a child's leave of absence form which is obtained from the school, the schools website or through the Reach More Parents App, at least two weeks prior to the leave date and before making any travel arrangements. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis. If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from school, the absence will be unauthorised in the student's record and a Penalty Notice will be sought (Section 444A of the Education Act 1996).

A Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children at their school under the following legislation:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents/carers 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/carer fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent/carer 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 Fixed Penalty of either £80.00 or £160.00

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 makes it a duty for parents/carers in relation to learners subject to a fixed period or permanent exclusion to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during the first five days of any such exclusion. If a child is present in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion during school hours the parent/carer may be guilty of an offence for which they can be prosecuted by the LA before a magistrates' court or issued with a Penalty Notice for £80.00 or £160.00.

Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in the case being referred to Lincolnshire County Council for consideration of prosecution under the Single Justice Process (SJP). This will lead to the matter being put before the Magistrates Court for prosecution.

School term dates are available from the school website, the Reach More Parents App and the school office.

In a 2025 response to a petition by SEND parents to grant leave of absence in term time for off peak travel, the Government has advised that there is sufficient scope within the current school term-time / holiday structure for this to be achieved outside of term times for children with SEN to travel 'off-peak'. The Government's guidance states that a pupil having SEN would not be a default reason to justify and authorise an absence in term time, but schools can seek further information to inform their judgement on a case-by-case basis.

Transport Related Absence

Fortuna's large catchment area and pupil's reliance on local authority provided transport to support journeys to school increases vulnerability to transport related absence. Absence may occur due to transport staff illness, vehicle maintenance issues, adverse weather impacting driving conditions (e.g. snow and ice), pupil behavioural issues impacting the risk assessment for safe travel or a pupil not been ready to depart within the allocated window of time.

In instances where a transport related absence is outside a parent/carer's control the school will register the absence as a Y1 code.

In all instances of transport related absence, the school administrator for attendance or the attendance champion will liaise with the parent/carer and/or local authority transport team to support planning for the child to attend school at the earliest opportunity.

At the discretion of a senior leader, short-term school organised transport may be used to support attendance in the form of school staff collection or a school organised taxi.

For school organised taxis, it is required that the crew have the appropriate safeguarding checks and badge - this will be confirmed at the time of booking by the school office. The parent / carer will be advised by email to check the taxi safeguarding badge before handing the child into the taxis care.

School Organisation

In order for the attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to pupils the importance and value of education.

In addition, there may be specific responsibilities allocated to individual staff such as the following:

Head Teacher

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.
- To regularly report progress on attendance to governors, pupils and parents/carers.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence.
- To liaise with the EWO.

Head Teacher together with Attendance Lead, CAFO or Senior Administrator Office Manager:

- To oversee the efficient operation of the attendance system and the collation and analysis of attendance data.
- To oversee the work of administrative staff.
- To produce the attendance profile for the whole school.

To meet regularly on attendance issues.

To liaise with the EWO.

To follow-up immediately any unexplained absence by contacting parents/carers.

To inform senior staff of concerns in a timely manner

To send daily attendance reports to Head Teacher/ CAFO/ Taxi Co-ordinator.

To produce termly attendance reports for the Head Teacher.

To produce and send termly (Fortuna) monthly (Athena) reports for EWO and advise of any actions taken, and to act on recommendations made.

To produce attendance concern letters, including Penalty Final Warning Letters on behalf of Head Teacher, EWO as instructed.

To produce termly attendance reports for parents, with year to date and term attendance data.

Advise Head Teacher/ EWO of any absence that may fall under Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board CME procedures, from Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services March 2021.

Governors

Governors are provided with school attendance details at each full governing body meeting and also discussed in a separate item at the safeguarding and standard committee meetings with specific information in the report.

Governors monitor the effectiveness of attendance strategies and hold leaders to account for attendance outcomes, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The EWO:

Will regularly liaise and consult with the school regarding attendance issues, this includes receiving termly reports via email and termly meetings with Administrative Assistant/School Attendance Lead.

Will provide advice regarding the regulations governing the part-time employment of school children.

Will prepare and recommend legal proceedings in cases of irregular school attendance including Penalty Notices Education Supervision Orders and Parenting Orders.

May request medical evidence if the authenticity of an illness is in doubt and request a medical view should further support be required.

May undertake home visits to meet with parents/carers to discuss concerns related to school attendance.

Data Protection

The Fortuna School follows this policy alongside the data protection policy.

The school will share information with the Police and/or Social Care where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.

Safeguarding

The Fortuna School follows this policy alongside the child protection and safeguarding policy.