



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date Policy Reviewed	1 September 2024
Date of Next Review	1 September 2025
Person(s) responsible for review	SLT (Deputy Head Pastoral / Head)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Manor Preparatory School aims to provide an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to strive for excellence.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important, therefore, that parents make sure that their child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this. Where this Policy refers to 'you' or 'your', this refers to parents of children attending The Manor Preparatory School.

The Manor recognises that whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and high attendance expectations should be set for all pupils, our Attendance Policy should account for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently but in doing so, The Manor will always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. In both the development and implementation of our policy, The Manor will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 or considerations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will significantly affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Children are also best safeguarded from exploitation and other risks in the wider community by attending school regularly, where they are supervised by qualified and caring professionals.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

This policy works to meet the mandatory requirements laid out in the Government guidance document: ['Working together to improve school attendance'](#).

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility and our work in this area should be a partnership between parents, pupils and all members of school staff. To help us focus on this, when academic reports are sent out, your child's attendance and punctuality record will be included.

All schools have a duty to promote and incentivise good attendance. At The Manor, our approach to promoting good attendance is to ensure school is a happy place with a sense of belonging for each child, beginning when a member of our Senior Leadership Team welcomes them at the school gate. Our nurturing pastoral care system ensures close monitoring of each child and wherever there are concerns for their wellbeing, including attendance concerns, we support them and their families on a case-by-case basis.

3. STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDANCE

Those staff responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mr Varun Footring	Deputy Head Pastoral and Senior Attendance Champion	vfootring@manorprep.org 01235 858480
Mrs Pippa McConnell	Head of Pre-Prep	pmcconnell@manorprep.org 01235 858485
Mrs Rachel Hamlyn	Head	head@manorprep.org 01235 858460
Mrs Nicole Burroughs	Director of Admissions, Communications and Marketing	registrar@manorprep.org 01235 858462
Mrs Sarah Horrox	School Secretary	schoolsecretary@manorprep.org 01235 858458
Mr Mark Skidmore	School Governor with responsibility for Attendance	mskidmore@manorprep.org

4. UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day of absence from school has to be classified by the school as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a legitimate reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school

time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes. In the case of medical/dental appointments, The Manor may require evidence of the appointment to be able to authorise the absence.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' (permission) has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (County Attendance Team) being engaged. Examples of unauthorised absences include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to be marked in the register
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been authorised by the Head
- Excessive illness without medical evidence

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, parents must never cover up their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives children the impression that attendance does not matter and often perpetuates the behaviour.

Parents can support their child by:

- Ensuring regular and early bedtimes
- Helping with homework
- Having uniform and equipment prepared the night before
- Providing a healthy breakfast
- Reporting any academic or social concerns promptly
- Maintaining open and honest communication with The Manor
- Being positive about school, even if your own experience was less than positive
- Encouraging your child to invite friends home for play dates

If you have concerns that your child is experiencing emotionally-based school avoidance, please contact your child's form teacher, Head of Section or Mr Varun Footring as Deputy Head Pastoral and Senior Attendance Champion.

5. SEVERE ABSENTEEISM (SA)

A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' when they miss 50% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level is causing significant damage to any child's academic and social progress and can have lifelong consequences. All SA pupils at The Manor will have an Individual Attendance Plan, which will incorporate multi-agency input and will be part of an agreed joint approach with the local authority. You will be expected to engage with all partners to improve your child's attendance to 95+%.

6. PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level may cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to improve this.

The Manor monitors all absence thoroughly. Any child that is seen to have reached the PA threshold, or is at risk of moving towards that threshold, is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored and supported carefully through our pastoral system and we may discuss academic support for your child where absence affects their attainment.

PA pupils and their parents may be subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include allocation of additional support through a Mentor or a Learning Support Assistant, use of circle times, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. PA cases may be made known to the County Attendance team. If your child becomes a PA pupil, we may seek your consent to complete a Strengths and Needs (Early Help) Assessment with you and consider convening a Team Around the Family in consultation with the Local Authority. We may also work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.

Where there are safeguarding concerns, we will intensify support through statutory children's social care and work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for further information.

Please note that schools have a duty to provide the Local Authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised (G, N, O, and/or U).

Please also note that schools have a duty to provide the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on education for [children with health needs who cannot attend school](#).

7. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS OR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) WITH POOR ATTENDANCE

The Manor maintains the same ambition for attendance for all pupils.

Where pupils have medical conditions or SEND, we will ensure a joint approach with pupils and parents to support them pastorally and, where required, will put in place

additional support and adjustments. This may include individual healthcare plans and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.

The Manor will also consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.

Data for pupils in such groups will be regularly monitored, including at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governing Board meetings, as well as with local authorities where applicable.

8. SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH A SOCIAL WORKER

The Manor recognises that welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues can have an impact on attendance, whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration.

The Senior Attendance Champion is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead and The Manor will know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are. Academic support and reasonable adjustments will be made to help these children, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

The Manor will work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing relevant data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.

9. LOOKED AFTER AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Where The Manor supports any looked after and/or previously looked after children, we will ensure high expectations for the cohort, with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for these children.

The Manor will work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.

The Manor will also work directly with parents/carers to develop good home-school links that support good attendance.

10. ABSENCE PROCEDURES

If your child is absent, you must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence via the school office (01235 858458 or schoolsecretary@manorprep.org).

The Manor will:

- Telephone, email or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you
- If we are unable to make contact with you by phone, email or text, staff from The Manor may consider and conduct a visit to your home and we may seek advice from the County Attendance Team.

- We may follow this by inviting you in to discuss the situation with our Senior Attendance Champion (Mr Varun Footring - Deputy Head Pastoral) and/or the Head or other members of the SLT as appropriate if absences persist
- Refer the matter to the County Attendance Team where appropriate, including if unauthorised attendance moves below 90%.

11. CONTACT DETAILS

There are times when we need to contact parents about school-related matters, including absence, so we need to have your current contact numbers and email addresses at all times. Please ensure that The Manor always has an up to date number and email address for both parents and preferably a third emergency contact person's contact details.

12. THE COUNTY ATTENDANCE TEAM

Parents are expected to contact The Manor at an early stage and work with our staff in resolving attendance issues together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, The Manor may refer the child to the County Attendance Team at Oxfordshire County Council.

The County Attendance Team, with The Manor, will encourage you to engage with an Early Help Assessment. Education Supervision Orders may be discussed with you to support rapidly improved attendance.

Alternatively, parents may wish to contact the County Attendance Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of The Manor and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 01865 323513 and their email address is attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

13. LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and time with their class teacher getting information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

14. HOW WE MANAGE TIME KEEPING

The school day starts at 8:45am, with classrooms open from 8:30am, and we expect your child to be in class at that time (please note that children can arrive earlier than 8:30am and full details of drop off times and Breakfast Club can be found in our Supervision Policy).

Registers are marked by 8:45am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by 8:50am. At 9:15am, the registers will be closed. In accordance with Government Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, although this will be classed as an unauthorised absence.

The Manor will take a second register directly following the lunchtime period at 1:35pm for EYFS, Year 1 and 2, and at 2:10pm in Years 3-6 in order to support safeguarding and early identification of pupils who are late to return or whom do not return.

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Senior Attendance Champion (Mr Varun Footring - Deputy Head Pastoral) and/or the Head to resolve the problem, but you can contact us at any time for support if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

15. EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away during this time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in term time to go on holiday.

1. It is widely known that the link between a pupil's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.
2. Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary school, further education and employment.
3. Graduates earn, on average, double that of young people that leave school with no qualifications.
4. All schools are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising Exceptional Leave.
5. The Head will liaise personally with every family applying for Exceptional Leave to stress the importance of good school attendance habits and links between attendance and attainment.
6. Exceptional leave is most unlikely to be authorised when a pupil's attendance is less than 95%.
7. Exceptional leave will always be refused when The Manor is aware of any truancy.
8. Exceptional leave will always be refused when requests are regular (annual) or where patterns become identifiable.
9. Reasons for Exceptional Leave will be logged on the pupil's record may be shared as part of the transfer/transition process to future schools.

16. THE MANOR'S MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE

The Manor will continually work to improve attendance. The Governing Board hold the Senior Attendance Champion, Head and Senior Executive Team to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required.

Throughout the school year, we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. At Senior Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team and Governing Board Level, we analyse all absences carefully and where helpful, draw trends based on pupil's characteristics, vulnerabilities, days of the week, subjects missed and repeat illnesses.

The Manor will also use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. This monitoring is conducted by the Senior Attendance Champion, who discusses concerns with the Head on a weekly basis and the Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance on at least a termly basis. This will ensure we target our attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.

The Manor will work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.

17. SAFEGUARDING CONTEXT: CHILDREN WHO ARE ABSENT FROM OR MISSING EDUCATION

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. Keeping Children Safe in Education notes that it is important the school or college's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community.

Please see The Manor's Safeguarding Policy for our policy on Children Absent From/Missing Education.

18. SUMMARY

The Manor has a legal duty to report and publish our attendance policy to parents and to promote attendance, liaising with Oxfordshire County Council and the Department of Education as appropriate. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly and on time.

We have a lead Governor who scrutinises our attendance arrangements on behalf of all our pupils, in liaison with the Senior Attendance Champion (Deputy Head Pastoral).

All staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.