



Notre Dame High School

Sharing the love and goodness of God with everyone

Attendance Policy 2026-2027

Policy Name	Attendance Policy
Status	Live
Policy Author	Mr A. Marsden (Director of Inclusion)
Date Adopted	September 2026
Review Period	12 Months
Last Review Date	September 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027, or sooner if statutory guidance changes
Approved by	Local Academy Committee
Updates	September 2026 — citations, register timing, medical evidence, vulnerable cohorts, reasonable adjustments and remote education updated to reflect the statutory guidance in force from 9 July 2026

1. Mission Statement

The aim of this policy is to underpin our Mission Statement:

- To promote Gospel values
- To build a caring community
- To enable all students to realise their potential
- To develop links with parents
- Recognise that regular attendance is essential for safeguarding, academic success, and personal development

2. Aims

This policy aims to demonstrate our commitment to meeting our obligations regarding attendance, in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance, as updated with effect from 9 July 2026. Our aims include:

- Setting high expectations for attendance and punctuality.
- Promoting the benefits of good attendance.
- Reducing persistent and severe absence.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to remove barriers to attendance.
- Ensuring every pupil accesses the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Recognising that absence can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding concerns, and linking attendance monitoring to the school's safeguarding response in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (updated guidance in force from 9 July 2026) and is underpinned by the following legislation:

- Education Act 1996 (Part 6)
- Education Act 2002 (Part 3)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Part 7)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2013, as amended in 2024

This policy also has regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Department for Education guidance on mental health and attendance.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for setting high expectations for attendance, ensuring statutory duties are fulfilled, monitoring attendance data — including for the vulnerable cohorts identified in section 7 — supporting school leaders, and holding the headteacher accountable for implementing this policy.

4.2 Headteacher

The headteacher (Mrs D Cleary) is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, monitoring whole-school attendance, reporting to governors, authorising penalty notice requests, and communicating expectations to staff, parents, and pupils.

4.3 Designated Senior Leader for Attendance

The Designated Senior Leader for Attendance (Mr A Marsden) is the school's senior attendance champion as described in the statutory guidance, and:

- leads, champions and monitors attendance;
- develops strategies for improvement;
- ensures intervention plans are in place where needed;
- regularly monitors and evaluates progress in attendance;
- oversees attendance data and absence data analysis;
- builds close relationships with parents.

Contact: 0114 230 2536 | school@notredame-high.co.uk

4.4 Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer (Mrs K Birkinshaw) monitors daily attendance, follows up unexplained absences, and provides reports to staff and senior leaders. She is the first point of contact for parents regarding day-to-day attendance.

Contact: 0114 230 2536 | attendance@notredame-high.co.uk

4.5 Staff

Form tutors and class teachers are responsible for accurately recording attendance in Bromcom (the school's management information system). Administrative staff support by receiving absence calls, recording them, and signposting families for support.

4.6 Parents and Carers

Parents must:

- Ensure their child attends every day and on time.
- Contact the school before 8.50am to report an absence and each subsequent day.
- Provide more than one up-to-date emergency contact number.
- Avoid term-time holidays.
- Arrange medical appointments outside school hours where possible.

4.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend all sessions punctually and engage with support where attendance is an issue.

5. Attendance and Punctuality Expectations

- Students must be on site by 8.50am and in form time by 9.00am.
- Morning registers are completed by 9.10am, and afternoon registers during Period 4.
- Registers are taken at the same time for all registered pupils in both the morning and afternoon sessions - including pupils on part-time timetables, phased returns or other bespoke arrangements - in line with the statutory guidance.
- Registers close at 9.25am; students arriving after this may be marked absent (U code). Attendance is recorded using the national attendance and absence codes prescribed under the 2024 regulations.
- Persistent lateness will lead to interventions.

6. Day-to-Day Attendance Procedures

- First day calling: parents must notify school by 8.50am.
- The Attendance Officer will contact families where no explanation is received.
- Unplanned absence: parents should phone, email, or report via the My Child At School app (report absence section) daily with reasons for absence.
- Planned absence: requests must be made in advance using the school's leave of absence form with at least 20 days' notice. In line with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, leave of absence during term time will only be granted where the headteacher considers there are exceptional circumstances, and the school decides whether any absence is authorised.
- Medical evidence will only be requested where an absence need is complex, long-term or frequently recurring and the evidence will genuinely help identify suitable support, or where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of an illness. Parents will not face blanket demands for evidence for routine short-term illness.
- Follow-up: unexplained absences will be pursued by phone, email and, where necessary, home visits. Where a pupil's whereabouts are unknown or a pupil is at risk of becoming a child missing education, the school follows the local authority's notification and referral procedures.

7. Promoting Good Attendance

Notre Dame High School promotes good attendance through:

- Celebrating high attendance in assemblies and newsletters.
- Awarding certificates and prizes for excellent or improved attendance.
- Holding attendance campaigns and themed weeks.
- Recognising and rewarding punctuality.

8. Monitoring and Use of Data

Attendance is monitored daily, weekly, half-termly, and termly. Data is analysed by year group, cohort, and individual pupil. Reports are shared with tutors, senior leaders, governors, and the local authority as required. Data is used to identify patterns, support interventions, and evaluate strategies, and the school benchmarks its position against both the national average and the median of similar schools.

In line with the statutory guidance, targeted monitoring includes the following cohorts: young carers; pupils with a social worker and pupils previously known to children's social care; pupils with special

educational needs and disabilities, including those with an Education, Health and Care plan, for whom the school works with parents and the local authority to ensure suitable support to attend; and pupils who join the school with previously low attendance or disrupted education.

9. Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is defined as 10% or more absence; severe absence as 50% or more absence. In line with the statutory guidance, the school's approach follows the expect, monitor, listen and understand, facilitate support, formalise support and enforce sequence — support comes first, and formal intervention is used where support is not working or not engaged with. Notre Dame will:

- Meet regularly with families to understand barriers.
- Work with external agencies (for example Education Welfare and health services).
- Create personalised support and reintegration plans.
- Actively consider reasonable adjustments for pupils whose disability or special educational needs affect attendance, and consider a time-limited phased return before other interventions, with decisions documented.
- Use remote education only as a last resort and as part of a structured plan for returning to school - pupils remain coded as absent while receiving it — never as a long-term substitute for attendance.
- Consider formal interventions where support is not effective or is not engaged with.

10. Penalty Notices and Legal Interventions

Where support is unsuccessful or not engaged with, the school may request that the local authority issue:

- Penalty Notices (for unauthorised absence, including unauthorised term-time holidays), applying the national framework: 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period will normally trigger consideration of a penalty notice.
- Notices to Improve.
- Parenting contracts or Education Supervision Orders.

Penalty notices are administered through Attendance & Inclusion and the local authority. Failure to pay may result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

11. Equality and Inclusion

Notre Dame High School applies this policy consistently but considers the needs of pupils with specific barriers to attendance, including those with SEND, health needs, or family circumstances. Reasonable adjustments are actively considered, made and evidenced in line with the Equality Act 2010, the statutory attendance guidance and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance changes. The governing board will approve all updates, led by the Headteacher and the Designated Senior Leader for Attendance.

13. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour & Relationships Policy
- Anti-Bullying arrangements
- SEND Policy