



Attendance Policy

February 2026

Responsibility for this Policy: Mr Joe Hughes, Designated Safeguarding Lead
Reviewed: February 2026
Next review: September 2026

ABSENCE AND REGISTRATION

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents have enrolled their child at Cokethorpe School, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. National statistics for both the independent and maintained sector show that pupils with the highest attainment at the age of 11 and 16 have higher rates of attendance compared to those with the lowest attainment.

As a consequence, and in reference to “Working together to improve school attendance 2024” published by the DfE, Cokethorpe School takes attendance seriously and the Attendance Champion is Joe Hughes (Designated Safeguarding Lead.). The Attendance Champion can be contacted by phone on 01993 703921 or via email: jeh@cokethorpe.org

Registration

Form tutors/class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes for ‘present’ and ‘not present’ and submitting this information online via iSAMS within 10 minutes of the start of each lesson or registration period.

Registration Windows

In line with statutory requirements, Cokethorpe School records attendance twice daily to ensure accuracy and consistency in reporting. These registration points are as follows:

- Morning Registration (AM): This takes place during form time from 8:40–9:00am. Registers must be completed promptly and accurately by 8:50am.
- Afternoon Registration (PM): This takes place during Period 5 (2:10–2:30pm). Registers must be taken within the first 10 minutes of the lesson.

Both AM and PM registers form the official daily attendance record for each pupil and are reported via the school’s management information system (iSAMS). Timely completion of these registers is a legal requirement and ensures that attendance data can be acted upon swiftly, particularly where safeguarding concerns arise.

If a child arrives after the registration period has closed they are to sign in at the Senior School Office for the Senior School and the main reception in the Mansion House for the Prep School. As set out in ‘Working together to Improve School Attendance (2024)’, a child who arrives into school after the registration period has closed will be marked with the code U – ‘Arrived in school after registration closed’.

Attendance is monitored by our Attendance Officer (Mrs Sam Wadeson). The codes used for recording attendance are taken from ‘Working together to Improve School Attendance (2024)’ and can be found at the end of this policy. Registers must be completed in full, using the correct codes.

Notification of Absence

If a pupil is away from School, parents are required to phone 01993 703921 or email seniorattendance@cokethorpe.org or juniorattendance@cokethorpe.org or contact the child’s tutor directly to report their son or daughter’s absence as early as possible, but notification must be received by 8.30am. In that communication parents must state the name and tutor group of the child as well as

the reason for absence. If parents know that their child will be away for more than one day they can state this in one message, otherwise please contact the School each day that he or she is absent.

A list of all absent Senior School pupils is emailed to Senior School staff each day and a list of absent Prep School pupils is sent to the Head of Prep School daily.

In cases of extended absence, the School will provide work for the pupil to do at home whenever appropriate through liaison with parents.

Dealing with Absence

The School Attendance Officer will telephone (before 9.30am) if a pupil has not registered and no email or telephone call has been received. In their efforts to make contact they will make use of all contact information shown on our records. If it is not possible to make contact then the Attendance Champion will be informed. Parents must ensure that the School is made aware of any changes of address, email addresses and telephone number. If the absence remains unexplained it will be marked as unauthorised and becomes a permanent part of the pupil's School record. Where absence is recorded as unexplained the correct code will be inputted as soon as it is ascertained and no later than five working days after the absence.

If a child is missing education through unauthorised or unexplained absence for a continuous period of ten school days, then this becomes a safeguarding concern. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will inform the Local Authority.

The School will 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.

Promoting good attendance

We promote good attendance by using a combination of strategies that address various aspects of school life. These include:

1. **Engaging Curriculum:** We ensure that the curriculum is interesting and relevant to pupils' lives and future goals. When pupils find the material engaging, they're more likely to attend.
2. **Support:** We provide support for pupils facing challenges that might affect their attendance, such as counselling, support from tutor, or peer mentoring.
3. **Parental Involvement:** We encourage parents to be involved in their children's education and attendance. Regular communication between the school and parents can help address attendance issues early.
4. **Policy:** We have a clear attendance policy that is communicated to pupils and parents.
5. **Safe and Welcoming Environment:** We create a school environment that is safe and welcoming recognising that pupils are more likely to attend if they feel secure and valued.
6. **Monitoring and Intervention:** We regularly monitor attendance and intervene when patterns of absenteeism are detected.
7. **Extracurricular Activities:** We offer a variety of extracurricular activities that interest pupils. These can motivate pupils to attend school regularly to participate in these activities.
8. **Lesson attendance:** We register individual lessons in order to gain and communicate a clear awareness of the impact absence has on pupil performance.

In addition, the school shares information about the impact of attendance on pupil progress, specifically highlighting that:

97% attendance means that approximately 1 teaching week has been missed over the course of a year
94% attendance means that approximately 2 teaching weeks have been missed over the course of a year
91% attendance means that approximately 3 teaching weeks have been missed over the course of a year.

With this in mind, a weekly review of attendance patterns forms part of the agenda in Pastoral Team meetings with a view to identifying and addressing particular trends. This feeds into a formal monthly review of attendance, led by the Attendance Champion.

As a matter of course, the level of attendance of pupils is monitored and the following actions will be taken:

- 1 3 days (cumulative) - Tutor to contact home
- 2 5 days (cumulative) – Head of Year to contact home and if appropriate, meeting to put in place strategies to improve attendance
- 3 10 days (cumulative) – Attendance champion to contact home and if appropriate, meeting to put in place strategies to improve attendance

Any of the above contacts may result in the school encouraging engagement with external agencies. The School identifies 10% absence as being 'persistent' and, when appropriate, will work with Oxfordshire County Council to promote improvements. Where a child's attendance drops below 50%, this would be categorised as severe, and the school will work closely with relevant bodies to support the child and their family.

Additional needs

The School recognises some pupils may find it harder than others to attend School, and will work with those pupils and parents to try to remove barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. The School will make reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability that puts them at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with pupils without a disability, in relation to school attendance. It will also work with parents, and, where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.

Suitable strategies will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance. Where barriers are outside of the School's control, the School will work with parents and pupils to identify alternative sources of support or consider, where appropriate, making a referral for early help.

The above interventions are superseded by the following thresholds:

- 10 days continuous unauthorised absence will result in a report being made by the Admissions Team to Oxfordshire County Council
- 15 days cumulative absence over the course of an academic year will result in a report being made to Oxfordshire County Council

Late Arrivals and Temporary Absence

If a pupil arrives late to School or misses afternoon registration for any reason, he or she should report in person to the Senior School Office or Prep School Office to sign the late register. The school day begins at 8.40am and we expect all children to be in class at that time. Registers are marked by 8.50am and a child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At 9am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if a child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

Parents are strongly encouraged to make any appointments (eg dentist, doctors, music exams) out of School hours but if this is not possible should email seniorattendance@cokethorpe.org or juniorattendance@cokethorpe.org. The register can be updated in advance. Before leaving the School site it is the responsibility of the pupil to sign out at the Senior School Office having obtained a permission slip from their Housemaster or Housemistress. Prep School children go to the Prep School Office where they are signed out.

Long Term Absence

Long term absences, such as holidays during term time, are actively discouraged and should always be preceded by a letter or email from parents to the Housemaster or Housemistress requesting permission for their child to be away from School.

Occasionally, parents may want to ask permission to take their child out of School for an important event or family occasion. Any application for Leave of Absence is considered on an individual basis, with reasons for the request, the effect on the continuity of the child's learning, and his/her overall attendance taken into account. Parents are asked not to request absence for family holidays unless there is strong reason to do so (the increased cost of a family holiday during the school holidays is not a valid reason). Parents should make every effort to contact the school well in advance where possible, especially before any holiday arrangements have been confirmed. All requests for Leave of Absence should be sent, with a brief letter or email of explanation, to the Head of Year.

If a Child Becomes Unwell

If a child is unwell during the day, they will be taken to our School Medical Centre. The School Nurse will contact their parents if the child needs to be collected. The child's parents must phone or email the School if the pupil is still unwell the next day.

Governor oversight

Attendance trends and casework are reported to the Compliance Committee on a termly basis.

Useful Information

The Oxfordshire attendance team can be contacted on 01865 323513 or attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The County Attendance officer is Dawn Softley: dawn.softley@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Useful templates for attendance support conversations and records can be found on the [Oxfordshire Schools County Attendance Team](#) website.

DfE Guidance 2024 – [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

(Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities)

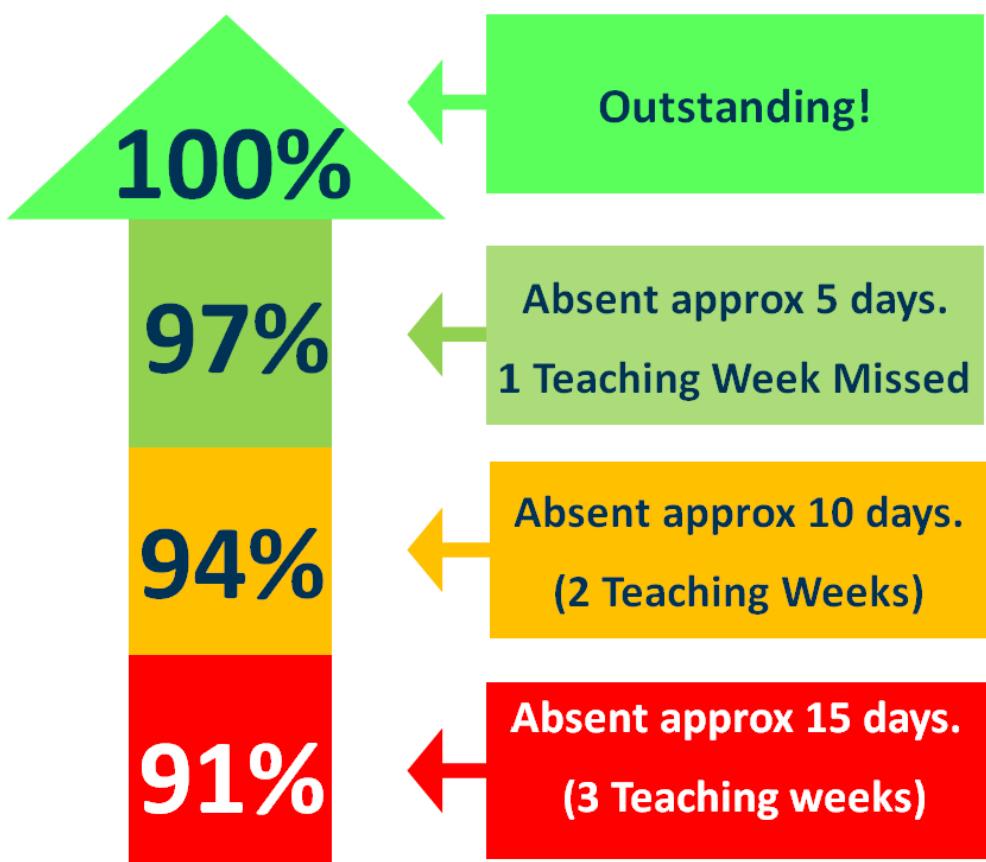
Attendance Codes

Codes	Pupil Attendance Codes
/	Morning session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
\	Afternoon session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
B	Awaiting a place for any other approved educational activity (Where schools use code B, they must also record the nature of the educational activity in the Nature of Absence area)
C	Absent with leave for other circumstances
C1	Absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
C2	Absent with leave, of compulsory school age and temporary reduced timetable does not require them to attend
D	Attending another school at which they are a registered pupil
E	Excluded from the school
G	Absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday
I	Unable to attend because of sickness
J1	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Attending a place, other than the school or another school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by LA (under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014) (Where schools use code K, they must also record the nature of the educational activity in the Nature of Absence area)
L	Absent from the school when attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended
M	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Absent – circumstances not yet established The correct code should be entered no more than 5 days after the session. If a reason cannot be established for the absence, the code can be amended to O
O	Absent – other circumstances
P	Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements by LA to facilitate their attendance
R	Day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs
S	Absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Mobile child whose parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and is travelling with that parent
U	Absent for registration – arrived in school after registration closed
V	Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a visit or trip
W	Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience
X	Absent with leave, not of compulsory school age and timetable does not require them to attend
Y1	Unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of pupil's home and transport to and from school normally provided is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and pupil cannot be accommodated in parts of the premises that remain in use
Y4	Whole school closed when school was due to meet for a session, but session has been cancelled
Y5	Unable to attend because pupil is subject to a sentence of detention
Y6	Travel to or attendance at school would be contrary/prohibited by guidance/law relating to incidence or transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause (Where schools use code Y7, they must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause in the Nature of Absence area)
Z	Pupil's name entered in advance of start date
#	Planned whole school closure – no session to take place

Blue – Nature of Absence needs to be recorded



Improving Attendance is everyone's business



DFE Working together to improve school attendance, 2024