



Meadow View Farm School
excellence as standard

Attendance Policy & Procedures

(including Children Missing Education)

School	Meadow View Farm School
Reviewed	September 2026
Review cycle	Annually, or sooner following changes to statutory guidance
Key guidance	Working Together to Improve School Attendance (updated July 2026); Children Missing Education statutory guidance (September 2025); School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

1. Purpose and Ethos

At Meadow View Farm School (MVFS), we recognise that regular attendance and punctuality are fundamental to a child's academic, emotional and social development. Given the complexity of needs among our pupils, including social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, autism, ADHD, PDA profiles and associated needs, our approach to attendance is trauma-informed, relational and highly personalised.

We work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers to understand barriers to attendance and address them compassionately and promptly. We maintain high expectations for attendance while recognising that some pupils may need reasonable adjustments, carefully planned support and multi-agency involvement to access education successfully.

This policy should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, medical needs and child protection procedures.

2. Statutory Framework

MVFS has regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance, updated July 2026, and Children Missing Education statutory guidance, updated September 2025. The school also complies with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

MVFS maintains its admission and attendance registers electronically. Attendance is recorded at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session using the statutory national attendance and absence codes.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

School leadership and attendance

- The Headteacher has overall responsibility for promoting high attendance and ensuring the school fulfils its statutory duties.
- The school identifies a senior leader to champion attendance and ensure that attendance is considered alongside safeguarding, SEND, family support and wider pastoral information.
- Attendance patterns are monitored regularly so that emerging concerns can be identified and support offered early.
- The school works with the Local Authority, social care, health, the Virtual School and other agencies where appropriate.

All staff

- Record attendance accurately and promptly and follow the school's first-day and safeguarding procedures.
- Share concerns about absence, patterns of non-attendance or children missing education with the DSL and/or Attendance Lead.
- Record relevant safeguarding and attendance concerns on CPOMS, or the school's designated recording system.

Parents and carers

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and on time unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- Notify the school promptly of absence and provide the reason for it.
- Keep the school informed of changes to contact details, home address and other information relevant to attendance or safeguarding.
- Work with the school and other services where support is offered to address barriers to attendance.

4. Reporting Absence

If a child is unwell or otherwise unable to attend:

- Parents/carers should contact the school office on 01455 840825 by 9:00am on the first day of absence.
- If the absence continues, daily updates are expected unless another arrangement has been agreed with school.
- Where parents/carers are unsure how long a child should remain absent because of illness or infection, they should contact the school office.
- For complex or ongoing barriers, parents/carers are encouraged to speak with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Family Support Worker.

The school will determine the appropriate attendance code in accordance with the statutory coding framework. A reason supplied by a parent does not automatically mean an absence will be authorised.

5. Medical and Other Appointments

We recognise that pupils at MVFS may have a higher number of medical, therapeutic or specialist appointments. We ask families to:

- Give advance notice of appointments wherever possible.
- Provide appointment information or other appropriate evidence where this is reasonably required, particularly where absence becomes frequent or prolonged.
- Arrange routine appointments outside school hours wherever reasonably possible.

Where an appointment takes place during the school day, pupils should attend school for as much of the day as reasonably possible.

6. First-Day Response and Unexplained Absence

- If the school has not received a reason for absence by 9:30am, staff will attempt to contact parents/carers by telephone, text and/or email.
- Where contact cannot be established, further reasonable enquiries will be made in light of the pupil's individual circumstances and safeguarding risk.
- A home visit may be undertaken where appropriate.
- Where a child has an allocated professional, that professional may be contacted if this is necessary and proportionate.
- If there is reason to believe a child may be at immediate risk of harm, the DSL will consider referral to Children's Social Care and/or the police without delay.

Unexplained absence will be recorded using the appropriate statutory code while enquiries continue.

7. Lateness

- The school day starts at 9:00am and the morning register closes at 9:30am.
- A pupil arriving after 9:00am but before the register closes at 9:30am will be recorded as late using Code L.
- A pupil arriving after the register has closed will be recorded using Code U unless another statutory attendance code applies to the circumstances.

Repeated lateness will be monitored. The school will work with the pupil and family to understand the reasons and identify appropriate support.

8. Attendance Monitoring, SEND and Support

MVFS takes a proactive and holistic approach. Attendance information is considered alongside the pupil's SEND, safeguarding, health, transport, emotional regulation, family circumstances and other relevant factors.

- Individual and cohort attendance patterns are analysed to identify concerns early.
- The school seeks to understand and remove barriers to attendance rather than relying on sanctions alone.
- Reasonable adjustments and personalised strategies will be considered where a pupil's disability or special educational needs affect attendance.
- Support may include attendance meetings, family support, emotion coaching, adapted transitions, transport planning, phased reintegration and coordinated multi-agency work.
- Where appropriate, the school will liaise with the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team and other relevant services.

9. Temporary Part-Time or Reduced Timetables

A part-time or reduced timetable will only be used in exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests and forms part of a temporary support, medical or reintegration plan. It will not be used to manage behaviour or as an informal exclusion.

- The arrangement will normally be agreed with the parent/carer and, where appropriate, relevant professionals.
- The plan will identify its purpose, start date, review dates, intended duration and a clear route towards increased attendance/full-time education.
- The arrangement will be reviewed regularly and will not continue indefinitely.
- Sessions that a pupil is not expected to attend because an agreed temporary part-time timetable is in place will be recorded using Code C2 only where the statutory conditions for that code are met.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the school will consider the plan and involve the Local Authority and relevant professionals where appropriate.

10. Persistent and Severe Absence

A pupil is persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of their possible school sessions. A pupil is severely absent when they miss 50% or more of their possible sessions.

Where a pupil is persistently absent, at risk of becoming persistently absent, or severely absent, MVFS will respond according to need. This may include:

- Meeting with the pupil and parents/carers to understand the barriers to attendance.
- Agreeing a personalised attendance support plan with clear actions and review arrangements.
- Considering reasonable adjustments and support linked to SEND, health, transport, family circumstances and emotional wellbeing.
- Working with the Local Authority, Virtual School where applicable, social care, health and other relevant agencies.
- For severe absence, taking a particularly intensive and coordinated support approach.

Where voluntary support has not been effective, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate, the school and Local Authority may consider formal attendance intervention in line with statutory guidance and the Local Authority's arrangements.

11. Formal Attendance Intervention and Penalty Notices

MVFS's priority is to understand barriers and provide appropriate support. However, where a child is of compulsory school age and attendance remains poor without a lawful reason, formal intervention may be considered where the legal tests are met.

12. Attendance Returns and Information Sharing

MVFS will make statutory returns and share attendance information with the Local Authority as required by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

- An attendance return will be made where a compulsory-school-age pupil has been recorded exclusively using one or more of Codes G, N, O and/or U for at least 10 continuous school days.
- The school will also make attendance returns for pupils who fail to attend regularly at the intervals agreed with the Local Authority.
- Where the school has reasonable grounds to believe that a pupil will be unable to attend because of sickness for at least 15 consecutive school days, the required sickness return will be made to the Local Authority.
- Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately to support attendance, education and safeguarding.

13. Children Missing Education (CME)

Children Missing Education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

A pupil who remains registered at MVFS is not, by definition, a child missing education solely because they are persistently or severely absent. However, prolonged or unexplained absence may create significant safeguarding concerns and may require attendance returns, joint enquiries and Local Authority involvement.

Why CME matters

Children missing education can be at increased risk of underachievement, poorer outcomes, harm, exploitation and other safeguarding concerns. MVFS therefore takes prompt, child-centred action when a pupil's whereabouts or education arrangements are unclear.

Pupils who may be at greater risk

Risk may be increased for some children, including those known to social care, children in care, children in temporary accommodation, children from families who move frequently, children awaiting a school place, and children whose whereabouts become unclear. The school will consider the individual circumstances of each child rather than assuming risk on the basis of a characteristic alone.

14. MVFS CME and Missing-Pupil Procedures

Daily registration and immediate follow-up

Registers are taken twice daily. Unexplained absence is followed up promptly in accordance with the first-day response and safeguarding procedures in this policy.

Reasonable enquiries

Where a pupil's whereabouts or education arrangements are unclear, MVFS will make reasonable enquiries and work with the Local Authority and relevant agencies. Enquiries will be proportionate to the circumstances and informed by safeguarding risk.

Ten continuous school days

Where a compulsory-school-age pupil has been recorded exclusively with one or more of Codes G, N, O and/or U for at least 10 continuous school days, MVFS will make the statutory attendance return to the Local Authority and continue appropriate attendance and safeguarding action.

Twenty continuous school days of unauthorised absence

A pupil's name will not be removed from the admission register simply because they have been absent for 20 school days.

Where the statutory ground relating to 20 continuous school days of unauthorised absence may apply, MVFS and the Local Authority will make joint reasonable enquiries to locate the pupil and establish their circumstances. The pupil's name will only be deleted where all requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 are met. Where the pupil is located, the school and Local Authority must agree that there are no reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will attend the school again before deletion under this ground.

The school will not delete a pupil from the admission register unless a prescribed statutory ground for deletion applies. Off-rolling is unacceptable.

15. Admission Register and Local Authority Returns

- The admission register will be kept electronically and updated in accordance with the 2024 Regulations.
- The school will make a new pupil return to the Local Authority within the required timeframe when a pupil is added to the admission register at a non-standard transition point, and at other times if required by the Local Authority.
- The school will make a deletion return when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register where the regulations require this.
- The school will record and share required information about a pupil's address, parents/carers and known future education arrangements.
- Parents/carers are expected to tell the school promptly about changes to addresses and contact details.

16. Safeguarding

Attendance is a safeguarding matter. Staff must remain professionally curious where absence is unexplained, prolonged, unusual for the pupil or associated with other concerns.

- Concerns must be reported promptly to the DSL or deputy DSL.
- Where there is concern that a child is at immediate risk of harm or exploitation, a referral will be made to Children's Social Care and/or the police as appropriate.
- Staff should not delay necessary safeguarding action while waiting for an attendance process to conclude.
- Attendance information will be considered alongside other safeguarding information held by the school.

17. Communication and Review

This policy will be:

- Shared with parents/carers as part of the school's attendance information and admission processes.
- Published on the school website and made available from the school office.
- Implemented alongside clear day-to-day attendance procedures for staff.
- Reviewed annually, and sooner where legislation or statutory guidance changes.

18. Key Reference Documents

- Department for Education: Working Together to Improve School Attendance - statutory guidance, updated 9 July 2026.
- Department for Education: Children Missing Education - statutory guidance for local authorities and schools, updated 8 September 2025.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Education Act 1996.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.