

Attendance Policy

**LOW ROAD AND WINDMILL MUISC FEDERATION
OCTOBER 2026**



**Low Road and Windmill
Music Federation**

Attendance Policy

Music Federation

Windmill Primary School and Low Road Primary School

Academic year 2026 to 2027

Policy information	Detail
Executive Headteacher	Andy Gamble
Senior Attendance Champion	Lisa Lockey
Nominated governor for attendance	Janet Auckland
Policy owner	Governing Body of Low Road and Windmill Music Federation
Approval date	01.10.26
Review date	October 2027, or sooner if guidance, law or procedures change
Published at	www.musicfederation.co.uk

This policy sets out how the Federation promotes regular attendance, responds to absence and punctuality concerns, supports pupils and families, and uses statutory intervention where support has not worked, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate. It applies to all registered pupils at both schools. Where particular statutory attendance duties or enforcement provisions apply only to pupils of compulsory school age, this is identified within the policy. It should be read with the Federation's safeguarding, behaviour, SEND, medical needs and equality policies.

This policy is adapted from the Leeds Children's Services Learning Access Service guidance model attendance policy for 2026/27 and reflects the Department for Education statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance, updated 9 July 2026.

1 Policy statement

Music Federation seeks to ensure that every pupil receives an education that enables them to achieve, belong and thrive. Regular attendance is essential for learning, wellbeing, safeguarding and future life chances. Absence may be a symptom of wider barriers, so our starting point is to listen, understand and work with pupils, parents, carers and partners to remove those barriers as early as possible.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. We set high expectations for all pupils while applying procedures fairly, lawfully and consistently. We will take account of individual circumstances, including special educational needs and disabilities, physical or mental health, caring responsibilities, involvement with social care and other vulnerabilities. We will make reasonable adjustments where required by the Equality Act 2010.

2 Aims

- safeguard pupils and act promptly when absence is unexplained or gives cause for concern;
- build a positive culture in which pupils attend every day, on time and ready to learn;
- make expectations and procedures clear to pupils, parents, carers, staff and governors;
- identify patterns and barriers early through accurate registers, regular analysis and direct conversation;
- offer appropriate support first and review whether that support is improving attendance;
- prioritise persistent and severe absence through targeted and, where needed, multi-agency action;
- ensure practice is inclusive and compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and relevant SEND duties;
- use legal intervention proportionately when voluntary support has not succeeded or is not appropriate.

3 Legal and statutory framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 1996, including parental duties and local authority enforcement powers;
- Education Act 2002 and safeguarding duties;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and the public sector equality duty;
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended;
- Department for Education, Working together to improve school attendance, updated July 2026;
- Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education 2026;
- Department for Education, Children missing education, current edition;
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years.

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions;

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years.

Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs;

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years.

Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England;

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years.

Alternative Provision: statutory guidance;

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years.

Providing remote education.

- Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years.

The Federation will use the national attendance and absence codes and will seek advice from Leeds City Council School Attendance Service where coding or statutory action is unclear.

4 Partnership expectations

4.1 The Federation will

- provide a welcoming, safe and inclusive learning environment;
- take an electronic attendance register twice each day at consistent times;
- contact parents or carers promptly when absence is unexplained;
- share attendance information clearly and accessibly;
- listen to pupils and families and agree practical support where barriers exist;
- work with Leeds City Council and relevant health, SEND, social care and family-support partners;
- recognise improvement and strong attendance without penalising pupils for absence linked to disability, medical needs or circumstances outside their control.

4.2 Parents and carers are expected to

- ensure their child attends every school day and arrives on time;
- telephone the relevant school office on the first day of absence, before the register closes wherever possible, and on each further day unless another arrangement has been agreed;
- provide the reason for absence and an expected date of return;
- keep contact details up to date and, wherever possible, provide more than one emergency contact;
- arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours;
- request leave of absence in advance and understand that term-time holidays will not normally be authorised;
- engage with meetings, plans and support intended to improve attendance.

4.3 Pupils are expected to

- attend every day unless they are genuinely unable to do so;
- arrive on time and ready to learn;
- speak to a trusted adult if something is making attendance difficult;
- take part in agreed support and reintegration arrangements.

5 Contacts and daily arrangements

School	Address	Telephone and absence reporting
Low Road Primary School	Belinda Street, Hunslet, Leeds LS10 2PS	0113 271 6051. Telephone the school office and leave a voicemail if necessary.
Windmill Primary School	Windmill Road, Belle Isle, Leeds LS10 3HQ	0113 271 2115. Telephone the school office and leave a voicemail if necessary.

General enquiries may also be sent to info@musicfederation.co.uk. Telephone contact is required for same-day absence reporting unless the school has agreed another accessible method with the family. The Senior Attendance Champion, Lisa Lockey, can be contacted via the relevant school office or at info@musicfederation.co.uk. For more detailed attendance support, parents and carers may ask to speak to the Senior Attendance Champion.

Daily point	Federation arrangement
Pupils start	8.45 am, as published to parents and carers
Morning register	Taken promptly at the start of the school day
Register closes	9.15 am; it must be no later than 30 minutes after the register opens
Afternoon register	Taken promptly at the start of the afternoon session
Late before closure	Code L
Late after closure without an authorised reason	Code U for the affected session

School day ends

TO CONFIRM for each school before publication

Afternoon register closes

TO CONFIRM; use the same register-open period as required by current guidance and no longer than 30 minutes

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Governing Body

- set and champion clear attendance expectations;
- hold the Senior Attendance Champion to account for implementation;
- review attendance information regularly, including persistent and severe absence and relevant pupil groups;
- challenge disparities and the impact of support and intervention;
- ensure staff receive suitable training and that resources are proportionate to need;
- ratify and review this policy at least annually.

6.2 Senior Attendance Champion

- provide strategic leadership and ensure effective systems operate across both schools;
- ensure attendance is integrated with safeguarding, SEND, inclusion, behaviour and family support;
- analyse data, benchmark performance and identify pupils, groups and patterns requiring action;
- ensure regular Targeting Support Meetings and appropriate work with Leeds City Council;
- authorise leave of absence decisions or delegate them appropriately under direction of EHT
- oversee escalation and ensure legal action is considered lawfully and proportionately with EHT.

6.3 Attendance, safeguarding and office staff

- maintain accurate admission and attendance registers and use codes correctly;

- operate first-day contact and escalate unexplained absence promptly;
- record contacts, actions, support and outcomes;
- monitor individual pupils and agreed cohorts, including pupils with SEND, pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils with a social worker and young carers;
- share concerns with designated safeguarding leads and other professionals on a need-to-know basis;
- prepare statutory returns and referrals accurately and on time.

6.4 All staff

- promote attendance through positive relationships and predictable routines;
- take registers accurately and promptly where this is part of their role;
- notice and report patterns, barriers and safeguarding concerns;
- apply agreed support and reasonable adjustments consistently;
- avoid language or reward systems that stigmatise pupils whose absence is linked to protected or exceptional circumstances.

7 Registers and first-day response

7.1 Register requirements

The Federation maintains electronic admission and attendance registers. The register is a legal record and must be completed accurately at the time specified. Retrospective changes must be supported by a recorded reason. The appropriate national code will be entered for every pupil in each session. Every entry in the admission and attendance registers will be preserved for six years from the date the entry was made. Where an amendment is made, the register will retain the original entry and show the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name of the person making it.

Code N means that the reason for absence has not yet been established. It will be followed up promptly and replaced with the correct code within five school days. If no reason is established, it will be changed to code O.

7.2 Unexplained absence

1. Office or attendance staff check messages and contact the parent or carer when no reason has been received.
2. If contact is not made, staff use available emergency contacts and consider information already held by the school.
3. The concern is escalated to the safeguarding or attendance lead where the pupil is vulnerable, the absence is unusual, contact cannot be made, or there is any welfare concern.
4. Where contact cannot be established, the safeguarding or attendance lead will assess the level of risk using information known about the pupil and family. The school may undertake a home welfare visit on the first day of unexplained absence where this is necessary and proportionate. A visit will not be delayed where the pupil is vulnerable, the absence is unusual, or there is concern about the pupil's whereabouts, safety or wellbeing. Where applicable, the pupil's social worker and/or Youth Offending Team worker will also be informed of unexplained absence.
5. Home visits will be undertaken by authorised staff in accordance with the Federation's safeguarding, staff-safety, lone-working and home-visiting procedures. The reason for the decision, the visit, attempts to make contact and the outcome will be recorded. Staff have no automatic right of entry to a family home. Where there is an immediate or serious safeguarding concern, the school will contact Children's Social Work Services, the police or another appropriate agency without waiting for a home visit. Where the pupil already has a social worker or other lead professional, that professional will be informed promptly.

6. Actions and outcomes are recorded. Repeated unexplained absence triggers a review of barriers and the need for further support or intervention.

8 Punctuality

Arriving late disrupts learning and can leave pupils unsettled. Parents and carers must ensure pupils arrive by the published start time. Pupils arriving late must report through the school's designated entrance so that they are signed in safely and the register is corrected.

Repeated lateness will be discussed with the pupil and family. The school will seek to understand the cause, agree practical support and set clear expectations. Late arrival after the register closes, without an authorised reason, is recorded as unauthorised absence for that session and may contribute to statutory intervention thresholds.

9 Authorised and unauthorised absence

9.1 Illness and medical appointments

Absence may be authorised where a pupil is too unwell to attend. Medical evidence will not be requested routinely. Reasonable evidence may be requested where clarification is needed to record absence accurately or where repeated or prolonged absence requires coordinated support. The school will not require families to incur unnecessary cost to provide evidence.

Routine appointments should be made outside school hours. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend before and after the appointment where practicable. The school may request an appointment card or similar confirmation.

9.2 Leave of absence and exceptional circumstances

The Executive Headteacher may grant leave only where exceptional circumstances apply. Each written request will be considered individually, taking account of its specific facts and the pupil's circumstances. There will be no blanket approval arrangements. A family holiday, affordability of travel or availability of accommodation will not normally amount to exceptional circumstances.

Requests must be made in advance using the Federation's leave-of-absence process. The decision and any authorised period will be confirmed in writing. Absence taken without permission, or beyond the period granted, will be unauthorised and may lead to a penalty notice or other legal action.

9.3 Religious observance, performance and other authorised circumstances

The school will authorise absence on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Other authorised circumstances, including regulated performances or employment abroad, will be considered and coded in accordance with the regulations and current guidance.

9.4 Examples of unauthorised absence

- absence without a satisfactory explanation;
- arrival after the register closes without an authorised reason;
- term-time holiday or leave not granted in advance;
- remaining absent beyond an authorised period;
- shopping, birthdays, haircuts, translating for relatives or caring for others where no authorised basis applies;
- unnecessary absence for the whole session around a short appointment.

10 Supporting attendance and removing barriers

The Federation follows a support-first approach. The appropriate response will depend on the pupil, the pattern of absence, the barriers identified and any safeguarding concern. Support may include a trusted adult, pastoral or family support, SEND review, reasonable adjustments, medical-needs planning, phased reintegration, support with routines or transport, referrals to partner services and an attendance plan or contract.

10.1 SEND, disability, health and mental health

High expectations apply to every pupil, but the route to regular attendance may differ. Attendance staff will work with the SENDCo, designated safeguarding leads, health professionals and families so that support is coordinated. The Federation will consider whether policies, physical arrangements, communication or learning support place a disabled pupil at a substantial disadvantage and will make reasonable adjustments where required.

Absence linked to mental or physical health will be considered sensitively and in line with medical advice where available. Remote education is not a routine substitute for attendance. If used, it will be a last resort within a time-limited plan for reintegration to full-time education.

10.2 Pupils with a social worker and young carers

Attendance will be monitored closely and information shared with relevant professionals in accordance with safeguarding and data-protection duties. The school will seek to identify young carers and agree support that reduces inappropriate caring demands during school time.

10.3 Part-time timetables

A part-time timetable will be used only in exceptional circumstances and must not be used to manage behaviour or avoid suspension. It requires parental agreement, a clear safeguarding assessment, a written plan for return to full-time education, specified review dates and an end date. The appropriate code C2 will be used only for compulsory-school-age pupils and only for sessions included in the agreed temporary arrangement. The local authority and other agencies will be notified where required.

11 Persistent and severe absence

A pupil is persistently absent when they miss 10 per cent or more of possible sessions. A pupil is severely absent when they miss 50 per cent or more. The Federation will not wait for these thresholds before acting where a concerning pattern is emerging.

Persistent absence will prompt individual analysis, discussion with the pupil and family, an agreed plan and regular review. Severe absence is both an attendance and safeguarding priority. It will receive intensive, coordinated support and may require a multi-agency meeting, involvement from Leeds City Council and a review of whether statutory children's social care or health support is needed.

12 Data, monitoring and confidentiality

Attendance data will be reviewed at pupil, group, year, school and federation level. Analysis will consider overall absence, authorised and unauthorised absence, punctuality, persistent and severe absence, reasons, repeat patterns and the impact of interventions. Leaders will pay particular attention to groups including pupils with SEND, pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils with a social worker, young carers and any locally identified vulnerable cohort.

Attendance information is personal data. It will be collected, used, shared and retained in accordance with data-protection law, safeguarding duties and statutory requirements. Information will be shared with parents, the local authority, the Department for Education and partner agencies where there is a lawful basis and it is necessary and proportionate.

13 Working with Leeds City Council

The Federation will participate in Targeting Support Meetings and work with the Leeds School Attendance Service to prevent and reduce persistent and severe absence. The school will make all required statutory returns and notifications, including New Pupil and Deletion returns, Attendance returns and Sickness returns, in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Where a pupil is likely to miss 15 school days because of illness, whether consecutively or cumulatively, the school will notify the local authority and work with relevant services so that suitable education can be considered.

14 Graduated response and legal intervention

Where attendance concerns continue, the Federation will use a graduated response. Support and legal intervention may run alongside one another when appropriate. The response may include an attendance contract, an Education Supervision Order, a Notice to Improve, a penalty notice, prosecution or a Parenting Order. Decisions will take account of support already offered, engagement, the reasons for absence, the pupil's and family's circumstances, SEND and disability, safeguarding, and whether action is likely to improve attendance.

14.1 National Framework for Penalty Notices

The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The sessions may be consecutive or non-consecutive and the 10-week period may span terms and school years. Reaching the threshold does not automatically mean a penalty notice will be issued; the school and local authority will consider the individual case and whether support, a Notice to Improve or another response is appropriate.

Penalty notice	Amount
First notice to the same parent for the same pupil within three years	£160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days
Second notice within the same three-year period	£160, with no reduced rate
Third occasion within the same three-year period	A third notice cannot be issued; alternative legal action will be considered

A penalty notice may be considered for unauthorised leave in term time and for other unauthorised absence. The authorised local process and current regulations will always be checked before action is requested or taken.

15 Children missing education and removal from roll

Unexplained or prolonged absence may indicate that a child is missing education or at risk of harm. The school will make reasonable enquiries, use emergency contacts, liaise with other schools and agencies, and notify Leeds City Council when appropriate. A pupil will not be removed from the admission register unless a statutory ground is met and all required enquiries, notices and returns have been completed. Safeguarding concerns take priority throughout.

16 Attendance codes and recording reminders

Code	Use	Federation action
N	Reason not yet established	Follow up and replace within five school days; use O if no reason is established.

Code	Use	Federation action
L	Late before register closes	Record arrival time and monitor repeated lateness.
U	Late after register closes	Record as unauthorised unless an authorised reason applies.
I	Illness	Record physical or mental health-related illness; do not request evidence routinely.
C	Exceptional-circumstances leave	Use only after individual consideration and approval.
C1	Regulated performance or employment abroad	Check licence or BOPA requirements and record evidence.
C2	Temporary part-time timetable	Use only for an exceptional, agreed, time-limited reintegration plan.
B	Approved educational activity	Ensure it is educational, approved, supervised and safeguarded.
K	Local-authority-arranged provision	Use for education provision arranged by the local authority.
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Use only in the specific circumstances permitted by regulation.
Y1 to Y7	Unable to attend because of unavoidable cause	Use the most specific Y code and record the cause.
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision	Use only while the pupil remains on roll and no provision is made for that session.

This table is a practical reminder, not a substitute for the current DfE code descriptors. Staff will consult Working together to improve school attendance when a code is uncertain.

17 Recognition and communication

The Federation will promote attendance positively and recognise effort and improvement. Recognition will be inclusive and will not shame pupils or disadvantage those whose absence is linked to disability, health, religious observance or circumstances beyond their control. Parents and carers will receive clear information about their child's attendance and will be invited to discuss emerging concerns early. Attendance information will be presented in an accessible and meaningful way. The Federation will not rely solely on headline percentages and will, where appropriate, explain the amount of education missed and its impact on learning.

18 Complaints

Concerns about the application of this policy should first be raised with the relevant school. Formal complaints will be considered under the Federation's complaints procedure. A complaint does not suspend statutory attendance duties or legal timescales.

19 Publication, implementation and review

The policy will be published at www.musicfederation.co.uk and made available in an accessible format on request. Leaders will ensure staff understand their responsibilities and receive appropriate training. The Governing Body will review the policy annually and sooner when legislation, statutory guidance or Federation procedures change. Identified weaknesses will be addressed without delay.

Appendix A Adoption checklist

Action before ratification	Status
Confirm and insert the nominated governor for attendance	Janet Auckland
Confirm the morning register opening and closing times for both schools	8.45 - 9.15
Confirm the named operational attendance lead at each school	Lisa Lockey
Insert the Governing Body approval date and next scheduled review date	01.10.26
Check telephone and email details and test the absence-reporting route	Complete
Publish the ratified policy and brief staff and parents	ASAP Post 01.10.26
Confirm school day end time for each school	To confirm
Confirm afternoon register opening and closing times	To confirm

Appendix B Key sources

Department for Education, Working together to improve school attendance, updated 9 July 2026:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/208/contents/made>

Music Federation website: <https://www.musicfederation.co.uk/>

Music Federation contact information: <https://www.musicfederation.co.uk/contact-us>