

ABSENCE & MISSING CHILD POLICY

Regulatory

Last Review: October 2025
Next review: September 2026
Review by: Head

Refer also to:

Admissions Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

[\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

[\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Missing Children and Adults - A cross government strategy \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK](#)

[Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

[\(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK](#)

[\(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Contents

Attendance Statement	3
Admissions Register	3
Registration	4
Missing Child	5
Absence and Illness	6
Children Missing Education	7
Notifying Wiltshire Authority of admissions and deletions	8
Unauthorised absences / deletion from the School Register	9
Attendance Codes	13

At Godolphin, we have high expectations across all areas of school life including attendance. We value positive relationships between both staff and pupils and want all pupils to feel they belong here and are valued. We work with our pupils to ensure that they have the highest possible attendance at school. We believe that this is the best way for them to succeed and to get the most out of all we have to offer.

There is a clear link between academic outcomes and school attendance. We want all pupils to achieve excellent outcomes to give themselves the very best chance in life.

It is vital we work together to teach our pupils the value of attending school each and every day. However, we do appreciate that at times, pupils may not be able to attend school. We ask our parents and carers to follow the processes below. They support our safeguarding procedures.

Should you have a concern about your child's attendance, then we ask that you contact us to discuss this. We believe in strong partnerships across all parts of school life. This includes attending school.

It is also important to us that pupils arrive to school on time, and they must be at school by 8.25am.

1 Admissions Register

1.1 The name of a pupil must be included in the Admissions and Attendance registers from the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. For most pupils the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

1.2 For each pupil, the admission register must contain:

- the pupil's name in full;
- name and address of every person known to the proprietor to be a parent of the pupil (and an indication of which parent the pupil normally lives with and which parents hold parental responsibility as defined by Section 3 Children Act 1989);
- where a parent notifies a school that a pupil will live at another address, in addition or instead, the new address, the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will normally live in future and the date from which it is expected the pupil will normally live there, where it is reasonably practicable for the school to ascertain this information;
- where reasonably possible, two or more emergency contact numbers for each pupil; where there is only one parent or carer, the School will make reasonable efforts to obtain a second emergency contact:
 - day, month and year of birth;
 - day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school;
 - name and address of the school last attended, if any;
 - an indication of boarding or day attendance;

- the name of the previous school (or additional school, in the case of dual registration) notified by a parent and the first date of attendance, where it is reasonably practicable for the school to ascertain this information.

2. **Attendance Register (twice daily)**

2.1 For each pupil, the admission register must contain:

- a. the pupil's name in full
- b. The pupil's form/tutor group
- c. Whether the student is absent or present at any given morning/afternoon session
- d. information about authorised and unauthorised absences (if statutory age) including:
 - attending an approved educational activity outside school (approved by the head and supervised by a person approved by the head, and including work experience or sporting activity)
 - unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of school site or part of it; unavailability of transport provided by school or local authority, where the home is not within walking distance)
 - taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the head or a person acting on the head's behalf; unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause; observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs)
 - taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken; the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established)

2.2 The Education Act 1996 outlines the basic legal obligations on parents to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are 'properly educated, either at school or otherwise'. If the parents choose a school, the child must then attend 'regularly'. Godolphin is committed to ensuring that the attendance register is maintained in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 which requires the keeping of registers and outlines procedures for family holidays and other leaves of absence. Schools are also required to classify every absence as authorised or unauthorised and to report each year on their absence figures. Deciding whether the absence is authorised is the School's responsibility, not the parents'. The majority of authorised absences will be for sickness and normally only unavoidable absences will be authorised; all leave for holidays or special family events in term time is discretionary and requires permission from the Head. Term dates are published well in advance and no pupil should expect to be allowed to leave early. Permission is needed from the Head to leave school early and is only granted in very special circumstances.

2.3 At Godolphin all pupils (including pupils of compulsory school age 5-16 years) are registered at the beginning of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon

session. Boarders are registered again in their houses in the evening. The register is logged electronically on ISAMS and backed up daily. It is kept for at least three years.

3.0 Missing Child

- 3.1 Having followed the procedures set out above, or if a pupil is still missing from a House roll call at any time, and cannot be located quickly, the Housestaff on duty will consult the Deputy Head, or in their absence, the Head, and determine what further action is necessary; this may mean contacting parents/guardian and, with their consent if this can be obtained, informing the police.
- 3.2 If a Day Pupil fails to register in the morning and no communication has been received from her parents, the School Receptionist will telephone the parents to establish the reason for her absence.
- 3.3 If any pupil fails to register at lunchtime, the member of staff on duty in the House will, after checking the morning absence list, inform the School Receptionist who will then check that the pupil concerned is present at her next timetabled lesson; in the case of a Sixth Former who has a study period, house staff will be responsible for locating the pupil. If the pupil is still missing the Deputy Head or the most senior member of staff on site, should be informed and s/he will decide what further action is necessary.
- 3.4 An 'N' should be entered on the register for missing pupils whose whereabouts are not known at the time of registration. The tutor is responsible for following up the 'N's, and, with the Receptionist, for updating the school records, normally within a week of the 'N' being registered. A 'U' for 'Unregistered' should be allocated to a pupil who was in school but failed to register.
- 3.5 If a pupil is missing from a lesson, the teacher should inform the School Receptionist who will check whether the pupil is in an individual music or drama lesson or if she is in the Health Centre; if the pupil is still missing, the Deputy Head or the most senior member of staff on site, should be informed and s/he will decide what further action is necessary.
- 3.6 If a pupil is missing from a Prep or Activity session, the member of staff on Prep duty or in charge of the activity should first ring the appropriate House to check whether House staff have knowledge of her whereabouts.
- 3.7 If, after checking thoroughly in School, a pupil missing from Prep or an activity cannot be located, the member of staff on Prep duty should ask the boarding house to phone home, or, in the case of a boarder, inform a senior member of staff who will determine the course of action.

- 3.8 If, after following the above procedures, a pupil is still missing, the Deputy Head or, in their absence, the most senior member of staff on site, should be informed and s/he will decide what further action to take.
- 3.9 If a pupil cannot be located, it is better that the police be informed sooner rather than later. This will normally be done by the Deputy Head. If a member of staff has recourse to contact the police, the Deputy Head or Head must be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.
- 3.10 Staff must be alert to identify and respond to children who go missing on repeated occasions. These children will be known to the Pastoral Team and the Deputy Head must be notified.

4. Absence

4.1 Leave of Absence Requests – ‘Exceptional Circumstances’

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. If parents need to take their child out of school for any reason other than a medical appointment they should apply directly to the Head for agreement. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

4.2 Leave of Absence Requests for Medical or Dental Appointments or Illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil must be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it is an emergency appointment. In the case of medical or dental appointments parents should contact their child's tutor. If a pupil is ill and will not be attending school, parents should telephone the school receptionist on 01722 430500 before 8.25am on the first day of absence and every day thereafter unless the illness is prolonged, in which case the parent or guardian should provide a medical note stating the period of absence. The school follows Department for Education guidance '[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912212/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)' 2024 which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual pupil. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

4.3 Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff, usually the Sister in charge of the Health and Wellbeing Centre. In such circumstances, no pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

5. Children Missing Education

Our school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The school will make CME and Pupil Tracking referrals as appropriate. The school will seek advice from the local authority representative responsible for children missing education if unsure about any individual cases. All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college, particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities.

Staff, in particular Form Tutors and House staff, need to be alert to possible patterns of absence to help detect this and raise concerns with the DSL immediately.

- 5.1 If a pupil is absent on an unauthorised basis (ie not through sickness or authorised travel, etc.) for five consecutive days, the person in charge of the register (Receptionist) must inform the Head of Year and Deputy Head; and each day thereafter.
 - 5.2 Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
 - 5.3 If a pupil is absent for ten consecutive school days or more without permission, or because of illness, unavoidable cause, religious holiday or the local authority's failure to make the required transport arrangements, the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed and will contact the Child Absent or Missing in Education section of the Council of the pupil's residence. For Wiltshire, the number is 01225 718230 (extension 3).
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- 6. **Notifying Wiltshire Authority of admissions and deletions from the register at non-standard transition points**
 - 6.1 Where the particulars of a pupil are entered in the Admission Register for the School at a non-standard transition point or when a pupil leaves the School at a non-standard transition point, then in accordance with a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the School must make a return to Wiltshire authority for that pupil by the end of the fifth day after the day on which the particulars of the pupil are entered in the Admission Register or within ten days of the pupil leaving the School.

6.2 Returns are not required by Wiltshire for those joining First Year (Year 7) in September or those leaving the Upper Sixth (Year 13).

6.3 The particulars to be passed to the Local Authority are:

- (a) the pupil's name in full;
- (b) the pupil's gender;
- (c) the name and address of every person known to the proprietor of the school to be a parent of the pupil and, against the entry on the register of the particulars of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, an indication of that fact and a note of at least one telephone number at which the parent can be contacted in an emergency; where a parent of the pupil notifies the School that the pupil will normally reside with a parent at a specified other address in the future, whether in addition to or instead of the address at which the pupil normally resides:
 - the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will newly normally reside,
 - the specified other address, and
 - the date from which it is expected the child will normally reside there, where it is reasonably practicable for the School to obtain that information;
- (d) the pupil's day, month and year of birth;
- (e) the pupil's day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school;
- (f) the name and address of the school last attended, if any and
- (g) where a parent of the pupil notifies the proprietor or a person authorised by the proprietor of the school that the pupil:
 - is also registered at another school; or
 - will be attending a specified other school in the future, the name of that other school and the first date on which the pupil attended or is due to attend that school, where it is reasonably practicable for the School to obtain that information;
- (h) whether the pupil is a boarder or day pupil.

6.4 For the purposes of this regulation, a pupil is a pupil at the School from the beginning of the first day on which the School has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupil will attend the School.

7. Unauthorised absences / deletion from the School Register

7.1 The School will inform Wiltshire Authority when a pupil's name is going to be deleted from the admission register on certain grounds:

- when the child has been taken out of school to be home educated;
- when the family has apparently moved away;
- when the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend;
- when the child is in custody for more than four months;

- when the child has been permanently excluded;
- when a pupil's name is added to or removed from the admissions register at non-standard transitions

7.2 The Local Authority will be informed if:

- A pupil has been absent for ten consecutive days following an authorised absence;
- A pupil has missed ten consecutive school days or more without permission or because of illness, unavoidable cause, religious holiday, or the local authority's failure to make the required transport arrangements, where applicable;
- A pupil of compulsory school age has been recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (illness) and the school have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will be, or will have been unable to attend school because of illness for at least 15 school days during the school year, whether consecutive or not;
- A pupil fails to attend regularly, or has frequent but sporadic in attendance, as this could be a sign of neglect;
- The pupil leaves and is deleted from the School register before completing the Upper Sixth Year, or in accordance with Wiltshire LA guidelines, if different;
- The pupil has been taken out of school by their parents and is being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- The pupil has been certified by the school doctor as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
- The pupil has been in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the governing body does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- The pupil has been permanently excluded.

7.3 The Local Authority will be informed when the School has decided to remove a pupil from the register for any of the reasons listed above. This will be done as soon as the grounds for removal from the register have been met and in any event before removing the pupil's name from the register. Where a pupil has not returned to the School for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from the School without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register.

7.4 The Information to be passed to the Local Authority is:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides;
- at least one telephone number at which any parent with whom the pupil normally resides can be contacted in an emergency;

- if applicable, where a parent of the pupil notifies the School of a specified other address in the future, whether in addition to or instead of the address at which the pupil normally resides
 - the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will newly normally reside,
 - the specified other address, and
 - the date from which it is expected the child will normally reside there, where it is reasonably practicable for Godolphin to obtain that information.
- (e) where a parent of the pupil notifies the proprietor, or a person authorised by the proprietor of the school that the pupil:
is also registered at another school; or
- will be attending a specified other school in the future,
 - the name of that other school and the first date on which the pupil attended or is due to attend that school, where it is reasonably practicable for Godolphin to obtain that information;
- (f) whether the pupil is a boarder or day pupil;
- (g) the ground (*Children Missing Education*, 2024) upon which their name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Attendance Codes

Attending	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school

C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

