THE PORTSMOUTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The PGS Attendance & Registration Policy

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Key School contacts

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Key staff / contacts[2]	Whole School Attendance Officer: Mrs Claire Shahran (Whole School) Email: c.shahran@pgs.org.uk Telephone: 023 9268 1393

[1]Working together to improve school attendance 2024 and states schools are expected to designate a 'Senior Attendance Champion' (SAC) - a senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with pupils, Parents and external agencies. The SAC is expected to sit on the SLT and their name and contact details must be included in the school's attendance policy (see paragraphs 15, 25 and 26)

[2] Schools should populate this with their key contact details for attendance. This may for example be the SAC and school reception (where parents should report non-attendance).

1 Aims

1.1 This is the Attendance and Registration Policy of The Portsmouth Grammar School (the **School**).

1.2 The School aspires to high levels of attendance from all pupils. Good attendance is essential for all pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, well-being and wider life chances.

1.3 The aims of this policy are as follows:

1.3.1 to develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance;

1.3.2 to ensure, so far as possible, that every pupil in the School is able to benefit from and make their full contribution to the life of the School;

1.3.3 to prioritise and where possible improve attendance and punctuality across the School, reduce absence and set out the School's approach to the management of absence / non-attendance;

1.3.4 to recognise the linkages between attendance / absence and pupil wellbeing, specifically ensuring a consistent whole school approach to safeguarding; and

1.3.5 to help to promote a whole school culture of safety, equality and protection.

2 Scope and application

2.1 This policy applies to the whole School, including Reception classes as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); however, Pre-School pupils have separate arrangements as detailed in paragraph 2.3 below.

2.2 This policy is designed to address the specific statutory obligations on the School to record attendance and absence.

2.3 In the Pre-School pupils are registered and their attendance is tracked, but is not routinely reported on (for example to the local authority), other than to parents, as this group of pupils is under the mandatory age to attend school (see Appendix 1 below).

3 Regulatory framework

3.1 This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

3.1.1 Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2024;

3.1.2 EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers (DfE, updated 2026);

3.1.3 Education and Skills Act 2008;

3.1.4 Children Act 1989;

3.1.5 Childcare Act 2006;

3.1.6 Sponsorship Duties (UKVI, July 2024);

3.1.7 The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;

3.1.8 Equality Act 2010; and

3.1.9 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

3.2 This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

3.2.1 Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, July 2026);

3.2.2 Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (DfE, August 2024);

3.2.3 Communicating with parents about school attendance (DfE, June 2026)

3.2.4 Guidance for Parents on school attendance (Office of the Children's Commissioner, July 2024);

3.2.5 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance (NHS, April 2024);

3.2.6 Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2026);

3.2.7 Children missing education (DfE, updated September 2025);

3.2.8 Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school (DfE, August 2017);

3.2.9 Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (DfE, February 2024);

3.2.10 Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, November 2018);

3.2.11 Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools (DfE, February 2023);

3.2.12 Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (DfE, February 2023);

3.2.13 Providing Remote education: guidance for schools (DfE, updated August 2024);

3.2.14 Resources for families | Children's Commissioner for England (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk) – Guidance for parents on School attendance (DfE) (current 2024); and

3.2.15 SEND Code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and Department of Health, May 2015).

3.3 The following School policies, procedures and resource materials are relevant to this policy:

3.3.1 The PGS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

3.3.2 The PGS Risk Assessment Policy

3.3.3 The PGS Missing Child Policy and Procedure

3.3.4 The PGS Additional Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties Policy

3.3.5 The PGS Disability Policy for Pupils and the Public

3.3.6 The PGS Behaviour & Relationships Policy

3.3.7 The PGS Parent Terms and Conditions

4 Publication and availability

4.1 This policy is published on the School website.

4.2 This policy will be sent to Parents when pupils join the School and Parents will be reminded of it at the beginning of the school year and when the policy is updated.

4.3 This policy is available in hard copy on request.

4.4 A copy of the policy is available for inspection from Whole School Senior Attendance Champion, Laura Ryan (l.ryan@pgs.org.uk), during the School day.

4.5 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

5 Definitions and interpretation

5.1 Where the following words or phrases are used in this policy:

5.1.1 references to **attendance** include references to attendance for all or part of the timetabled school day.

5.1.2 references to the **Proprietor** are references to the board of Governors.

5.1.3 references to a **Parent** means:

(a) all natural parents, whether they are married or not;

(b) any person who has parental responsibility for a pupil; and

(c) any person who has day to day responsibility for a pupil (i.e. lives with and looks after a pupil).

5.1.4 References to a **pupil** includes anyone who is receiving an education at the school except a person who is 19 or over for whom further education is being provided, or a person for whom part-time education suitable for people over compulsory school age is being provided.[3]

5.1.5 Without conflicting with the statutory definition in paragraph 5.1.4 above, references to a **pupil** or **pupils** are references to a learner or learners aged 2 to 19 who receive their education at the School; where reference is made or intended to be made to a **child** or **children** who receive their education at the School, this will include those aged 2-19.

6 Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

6.1 The Proprietor has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy.

6.2 The Proprietor recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and has appointed a designated senior leader to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School, referred to in this policy as the AC.

6.3 To ensure the efficient discharge of its responsibilities under this policy, the Proprietor has allocated tasks in paragraph 18 below.

[3] This is the definition as set out in section 3 of the Education Act 1996 and referred to in chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024 .

7 The importance of good attendance

7.1 The School recognises the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. This is an integral part of the School's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance it recognises:

7.1.1 the importance of good attendance, alongside good behaviour, as a central part of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life;

7.1.2 the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, additional educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions and / or disabilities, mental health issues, safeguarding wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils;

7.1.3 the importance of setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicating these regularly and effectively to pupils and Parents;

7.1.4 that attendance is never "solved" and is a continuous process requiring revision and updating of messages, processes and strategies; and

7.1.5 children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues, including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation.

8 School responsibilities

8.1 The School acknowledges that attendance is the essential foundation to securing positive outcomes for all pupils and that everyone has a responsibility to take proactive steps to manage and improve attendance across the School community.

8.2 The School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, setting high expectations for every pupil and consistently communicating those expectations to pupils and Parents.

8.3 Where there are challenges to attendance, the School will work effectively and respectfully with pupils, their families and, where appropriate, local authorities to address them.

8.4 The School will respond to non-attendance and / or lateness proactively, firmly, consistently and with care, with appropriate reference to this policy, its safeguarding and behaviour policies and the School's terms and conditions. It will act in a proportionate and targeted way in response to data or intelligence and ensure intervention is regularly reviewed.

8.5 The School will have robust systems in place to track and record attendance, reasons for absence and patterns at an individual level and by cohorts or groups in order to identify pupils at risk of non-attendance and those who are persistently absent and it will monitor and analyse this data regularly to facilitate early intervention to address issues.

9 Staff responsibilities

The SAC

9.1 The Proprietor has appointed a senior member of staff of the School's Management Team as SAC to have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. Details of the individual appointed are at the front of this policy and are widely publicised within School.

9.1.1 The SAC's responsibilities are:

(a) to set a clear vision for improving attendance in school;

(b) to establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure the systems are followed by all staff;

(c) to regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes;

(d) to have oversight of and analyse attendance data; and

(e) to communicate clear messages on the importance of attendance to pupils and Parents.

9.2 Staff with specific responsibilities for attendance[4]:

The staff identified in Appendix 1 of this policy have day to day responsibility for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. They should:

9.2.1 have a formal routine for registers being taken accurately each morning and afternoon (within the first 5 minutes of the lesson);

9.2.2 record all absences promptly and accurately using the processes specified;

9.2.3 seek explanations of absences required from pupils on their return to School;

9.2.4 make enquiries about unexplained absences, including those within the school day, and follow up with the pupil(s) to ensure that an explanation has been formally given to the School;

9.2.5 look out for trends or patterns in a pupil's attendance and inform the AC of any specific concerns;

9.2.6 deal with lateness to lessons consistently and promptly;

9.2.7 consider appropriate sanctions for pupils who arrive late to a lesson in line with the School's behaviour and discipline policies; and

9.2.8 discuss non-attendance and / or lateness with pupils and Parents (where possible) and emphasise the importance of punctuality and attendance.

9.3 All staff

9.4 The School ensures that all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance and are consistent in their communication with pupils and Parents about it.

9.5 The School provides appropriate training and professional development for staff consistent with their roles and responsibilities.

10 Registration and Attendance - School arrangements

10.1 The School will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence. These registers must be kept electronically. Contact details of relevant staff can be found at the front of the policy and other details about the School's registration and attendance arrangements can be found in Appendices.

[4] The School should provide information and contact details of the staff who pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day to day basis (such as a form tutor, head of year etc) and for more detailed support on attendance (such as a head of year, pastoral lead or family liaison officer etc) in Appendix 1

10.2 In the Pre-School pupils are registered and attendance is tracked, but is not routinely reported upon other than to parents, as this group of pupils is under the mandatory age to attend school. However, if they have safeguarding concerns for any Pre-School pupils, they must follow the procedures set out in our PGS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures. Appendix 10

11 Monitoring attendance

11.1 The School will undertake regular data analysis to identify and provide additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the School and develop strategies to address them. Such analysis may include:

11.1.1 monitoring and analysing weekly attendance patterns and trends and provide support in a targeted way to pupils and families;

11.1.2 using this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead);

11.1.3 undertaking frequent individual level analysis to identify pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeting actions for those cases;[5]

11.1.4 conducting thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends;

11.1.5 benchmarking attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level to identify areas of focus for improvement;

11.1.6 devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;

11.1.7 monitoring the impact of school-wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented; and

11.1.8 providing data and reports to the Proprietor to support its work.

12 Pupil responsibilities

12.1 School attendance is important to pupil attainment, wellbeing and development. The School therefore has high expectations of pupils as to their attendance and has systems in place to reward good attendance and manage poor attendance.

12.2 Pupils should be aware that:

12.2.1 they are expected to be present in-person for the duration of each School day;

12.2.2 they are expected to arrive on time and attend all timetabled lessons;

12.2.3 they should not leave a lesson or the School site without permission or otherwise in accordance with School rules;

12.2.4 they should engage with the School's arrangements for recording and managing attendance as set out in this policy;

12.2.5 any unexplained absence will be followed up;

[5] See paragraph 45 of Working together to improve school attendance 2025

12.2.6 persistent lateness or non-attendance will result in action being taken by the School. This may take the form of:

(a) offers of support to seek to identify and address any barriers to attendance (See EBSA guidance, Appendix X);

(b) communication with Parents;

(c) reporting to other agencies such as children's social care; and

(d) sanctions against them in line with The PGS Behaviour Management Policy.

12.2.7 If pupils are having difficulties that might discourage or prevent them from attending School or specific lessons regularly, they may speak to any member of staff, although the School encourages them to speak to their Form Tutor or those staff identified in Appendix 1 in the first instance. Pupils are entitled to expect this information to be managed sensitively.

12.2.8 Pupils who will be late to school are requested to communicate with their tutor, giving evidence to support their communication.

13 Additional needs

13.1 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 (See EBSA guidance, Appendix 5)

13.2 The School will make reasonable adjustments[6] 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.

13.3 It will also work with Parents, and where appropriate with the local authority, to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with additional educational needs and disabilities e.g. ensuring the provision outlined in a pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed.[7]

13.4 Where a pupil has an education, health and care plan the School will communicate with the local authority where the pupil's attendance falls or the School become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.

13.5 Suitable strategies and support will also be considered for pupils with any social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance (Refer to EBSA guidance, Appendix 5)

13.6 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.

13.7 The School will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using the national absence code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive or cumulative school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the current school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 15 school days.

14 Parent / carer responsibilities

14.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any additional educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

14.2 This means pupils 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.

14.3 The School will help Parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development and provide clarity on the short and long term consequences of poor attendance.

14.4 Expectations the School places on Parents can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy

14.5 Parents are bound by the terms relating to conduct and attendance in the parent contract and failure to ensure a child's attendance or engage with the School about it could amount to a breach of contract or a finding that the parent is treating the School unreasonably.

15 Training

15.1 Staff: The School ensures that regular guidance and training on attendance is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. As a minimum this will include all staff understanding:

15.1.1 the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances; and

15.1.2 the School's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance.

15.2 Dedicated attendance training is provided to any member of staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral and senior leaders. This should include:

15.2.1 the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers;

15.2.2 the process for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it;

15.2.3 the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data; and

15.2.4 any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

15.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

16 Information sharing

16.1 Personal information on attendance will only be shared in line with legal obligations and having regard to government guidance on attendance, safeguarding and children missing education.

16.2 The School, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to a pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familiar harms).

16.3 The School is legally required to share information from the registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

16.3.1 New pupil and deletion returns;

16.3.2 Attendance returns[8];

16.3.3 Sickness returns.

16.4 The law allows local authority officers access to the attendance and admission registers of all types of schools to carry out their functions under the Education Acts to support joint working between schools and local authorities. These officers are also permitted to take digital or physical extracts of the School's registers.

16.5 The School provides specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State. The School meets this requirement by having an electronic management information system containing the required information that can be accessed by the DfE[9]. The School also uses this tool to monitor pupil level attendance and understand trends in attendance patterns.

16.6 Where appropriate, the School is expected to inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences.

17 Record keeping and confidentiality

17.1 Attendance concerns, discussions with parents, support offered, decisions taken should all be recorded on CPOMS.

17.2 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

17.3 The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The School's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law. The School has published privacy notices on its website which explain how the School will use personal data.

[8] Schools are required to provide attendance returns to the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been recorded as absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the national attendance codes (G, N, O, and/or U). Individual local authorities must agree the frequency that attendance returns are to be provided with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month - see chapter 2 and content on sharing information in the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024

[9] Local authorities may seek, and schools are expected to provide, more frequent or comprehensive sharing of data than the statutory minimum where it is essential to fulfilling their obligations under the Education Acts and expectations set out in chapter 4 of the Working together to improve school attendance 2024 guidance. To avoid any unnecessary burdens for schools this should always be automatic from school registers and not require additional manual data collection/returns (see paragraph 50 of the guidance). Independent schools should note that they are not required to provide the specific pupil information on request to the Secretary of State relating to sharing daily pupil attendance data (see paragraph 52 of the guidance). We recommend independent schools consult their information management system providers for more details about the relevant permissions and accessible data..

18 Allocation of tasks and Version control

18.1 Allocation of Tasks:

Task	Allocated to	When / frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Monitoring the implementation of the policy	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Analysing attendance and absence data	SAC	As required, and at least termly
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	SAC	As required, and at least annually
Formal annual review	Safeguarding Committee, Governing Body	Annually

18.2 Version Control:

Date approved	10th November 2025 (SMT) (updated 1st Sept 2026)
Date reviewed	15th October 2025 (PRM)
Date for next review of this policy	Autumn 2026
Policy owner (SMT)	DH (Pastoral) (Whole School Senior Attendance Champion)
Policy owner (Proprietor)	Safeguarding Governors

Ph4290726

Appendix 1 School arrangements for attendance & registration

1 Managing attendance

1.1 The School monitors, records and shares data about pupil attendance and as part of its duty to safeguard and protect pupils and promote attendance. It accurately completes admission and attendance registers as required by law and set out in AppendixAppendix 2 2 and Appendix0 3 respectively. The admission and attendance registers are kept electronically and retained by the School for the relevant time period as stated by law.

1.2 Every school is required by law to maintain an Attendance Register and pupils must be registered twice a day: once at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The School uses an electronic registration system and the Department for Education national codes to record attendance and absence are used (see Appendix 4 for codes). School attendance registers are carefully monitored to identify any trends.

1.3 The School expects all pupils to be present at School for the whole of the School day, usually from registration at 08.25 – 15.35 (Junior School), 08.35 to 15.45 (Senior School) , but this period may be extended, for example for out of school clubs, sports fixtures or school trips. Exceptions to this are Sixth Form pupils who do not have lessons, at specifically agreed times in the School Day, and pupils who have been granted study leave or examination leave in accordance with the School's attendance arrangements. Study leave is not granted automatically and will only be authorised where the School considers it appropriate. Where study leave is granted, pupils may continue to attend school to revise should they wish to do so.

1.4 In the Pre-School pupils are registered and attendance is tracked, but we do not report on it other than to parents, as this group of pupils is under the mandatory age to attend school.

2 The role of Parents / carers

2.1 The School expects all Parents to:

2.1.1 make any application for an authorised leave of absence at the earliest opportunity;

2.1.2 notify the School of any absence or delay as soon as reasonably possible in accordance with this policy and when doing so, give an accurate explanation for this; and

2.1.3 cooperate with the School to explore possible barriers to attendance and to improve it where attendance has been raised as an issue.

2.2 Parents of day pupils should ensure their child attends School by 08.25 (Junior School) and 08.35 (Senior School) for morning registration.

3 Registration and attendance checks

3.1 Any pupil in the Junior School arriving after 08.25 will be recorded as late. Any pupil in the Senior School arriving after 08.35 but before the end of the registration period (09.00) will be recorded as late. Pupils missing from morning registration without a valid reason will be registered by their Form Teacher / Tutor with an N (reason not yet provided) which is updated with a more appropriate code once the reason has been

established. An email will be sent as soon as possible to parents of any pupils with an unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. For known vulnerable pupils, a phone call home will be made, in addition, at the earliest opportunity. Pupils who are late for school in the Senior School are required to provide evidence for the reason (e.g. a dated screenshot of a train schedule with delays or a dated map showing traffic delays). Unjustified lates will be tallied on ISAMS and, if repeated, will result in a sanction to support the pupils to understand the importance of being on time.

3.2 Once the registration session has closed the Attendance Officer will run an absence report and circulate to the nurse (Junior School) and all teaching staff (Senior School), as well as the Junior School SLT, JS Office staff and Visiting Music Teachers.

3.3 Afternoon registration will take place at 12.40 for KS1 pupils, 13.10 for KS2 pupils and 14.00 (the start of period 5) for Senior School pupils.

3.4 If a pupil is absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed they will be recorded as a late arrival (code L).

3.5 If a pupil arrives after the register has closed but before the end of the session without a satisfactory explanation e.g. because of an unavoidable cause, then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (code U) and the reasons given/not given will be recorded.

3.6 Registers will also be called at the beginning of each lesson (within the first 5 minutes) in order to identify and follow-up on absences from lessons that might occur after morning or afternoon registration.

3.7 All pupils leaving the school site because of a medical appointment or an approved absence are required to be signed out by parents in the Pre-School and Junior School. Pupils in the Senior School must sign out in Reception, and sign in again if they return to school that same day

3.8 If a pupil feels ill during the day they should notify a member of staff in the Pre School or Junior School or, if in the Senior School, they should report to the Health and Wellbeing Centre to be assessed. If a pupil is too ill to remain at school the parent or guardian will be contacted. This information will be communicated to the relevant teaching staff. Pupils must not contact their parents directly and ask to be taken home. If this happens, the absence may be unauthorised.

4 Reporting absence

4.1 If a pupil is to be absent from School for any reason, the parent / carer should contact the following below via the Parent Portal or via email to absence@pgs.org.uk (on first morning of absence and every day after that unless a longer period of absence has been agreed);

4.2 Where a pupil is ill, the School should be notified of the nature of the illness. Generic statements such as ‘unwell’ or ‘ill’ are likely to be challenged.

5 Arrangements for reporting subsequent absence

5.1 Absence will be recorded on the Attendance Register as set out in Appendix 40.

6 Managing absence

Our Attendance Officer sends the Heads of Year and Phase Leaders (Junior School) any 'lates' as well as any pupil with attendance currently sat at under 95% on a weekly basis. Heads of Year and Phase Leaders are responsible for monitoring their year group's attendance and following up with parents and pupils, with oversight from the Whole School Senior Attendance Champion.

7 Authorised absences

7.1 Authorised absence means that the School has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away (granted an authorised leave of absence) or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.[10]

8 Applications for an authorised leave of absence

8.1 Applications for authorised leaves of absence during the School day will be completed by Parents on the Parent Portal. They will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and will only be permitted if approved by the AC or the Head of the Junior School. The application should reach the school at least 10 days in advance.

8.2 While it is preferred that absence in term time is avoided, the School will consider each application for an authorised leave of absence individually, and decisions made based on a number of criteria including:

8.2.1 The stage the pupil has reached in their educational career

8.2.2 The pupil's academic record

8.2.3 The unique nature of the absence

8.2.4 If the application is to participate in a co-curricular activity such as sport or drama, the level of representation will be considered

8.2.5 Whether the pupil is sponsored on a Student Visa

8.3 The school understands that on occasions there are extenuating reasons that a pupil may need to be away from school and the AC or the Head of the Junior School will provide authorisation where there are compassionate grounds. Parents are asked to provide as much advance notification and detail so that each request can be considered carefully.

8.4 Apart from illness or where there are additional needs, no pupil should be away from School without prior permission from theAC or Head of the Junior School. All parents considering making an application for a holiday or absence for recreational reasons during term time are asked to consider the following points:

8.4.1 The school year generally has between 165 and 170 days. Term dates are published sufficiently in advance to allow parents to make use of remaining days in the calendar year for holiday purposes

8.4.2 Missed lessons place pupils at an academic disadvantage and may have unsettling effects, both socially and academically. Other pupils may be disadvantaged due to the disruption caused by the absence and it is always the responsibility of the pupil to catch up with any work that is missed in the Senior School, and the responsibility of the parent in the Junior School.

[10] A leave of absence may be granted by the Head or other person the authorised to do so by the proprietor. While the guidance is not specific on this point we recommend it is a member of the school leadership team

8.4.3 The period of absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the school register and the pupil's report. In exceptional circumstances the school may ask to meet with parents to discuss any unaccounted periods of absence.

8.5 Dental or medical appointments should be made during School holidays or after the school day except in cases of emergency when the AC or Head of the Junior School should be informed. It is preferable that a copy of the confirmation of appointment is provided via the Parent Portal.

8.6 If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the AC or Head of Junior School to determine the length of the time the pupil is or was permitted to be away from School. It will be recorded as an authorised absence. See section 3 of Appendix 3 for more details.

8.7 A leave of absence will usually be authorised for religious observance if the day concerned is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which Parents and pupils belong. Parents are expected to make a request for this type of leave of absence in advance.

9 Reporting duties

9.1 The School has statutory reporting obligations if a pupil fails to regularly attend their absence is unauthorised. The School must report unauthorised absences for a continuous period of 10 days or more to the local authority.

9.2 Each time the School's attendance register is completed it is treated as a contact point for these purposes.[11]

9.3 Action will also be taken in accordance with The PGS Missing Child Policy and safeguarding and child protection policy if any absence of a pupil from the School gives rise to a concern about their welfare.

10 Pupils with a Student Visa

10.1 The school holds a Student Visa sponsor licence which allows it to sponsor pupils under the Student Visa points-based immigration system. The school takes its responsibilities as a Student Visa sponsor seriously, including monitoring sponsored pupils' engagement with their studies and reporting any changes to the UK Home Office.

10.2 In particular, the school has a duty to withdraw sponsorship of any pupil that misses 10 consecutive 'expected contact points'. The school defines an 'expected contact point' as a 'School Day' (which includes a morning and afternoon session).

10.3 Tutors are informed of any Student Visa sponsored pupils in their class and that any unauthorised or unexplained absence of such a pupil should be immediately reported to the Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form. Action will be taken in accordance with the Junior and Senior School procedure outlined above and the school may request medical evidence as appropriate.

10.4 If attendance does not improve and a Student Visa sponsored pupil accrues a total of 10 consecutive unauthorised absences on 'School Days,' the school will ask the pupil to leave the school. The school will make a report to the UK Home Office within 10 working days of the withdrawal, with a copy of the report saved on the sponsored pupil's record.

10.5 In the event of a period of long term authorised absence (e.g. due to illness), the school will assess whether the pupil can still complete their course within their current Student Visa,

[11] The School may wish to insert its own definition of contact points e.g. just morning registration

consulting with the pupil and their parent/guardian accordingly. If the school concludes this will not be possible, the school will ask the pupil to leave the school. The school will make a report to the UK Home Office within 10 working days of the withdrawal, with a copy of the report saved on the sponsored pupil's record

Appendix 2 Admission register

1 Admission register

1.1 In accordance with the requirements of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 the School will:

1.1.1 maintain an admission register of all pupils (of both compulsory and non-compulsory school age) admitted to the School (also known as the school roll); and

1.1.2 inform the local authority of any pupil who is going to be added to or deleted from the School's admission register at non-standard transition points.

1.2 The admission register must be kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

1.3 The school must ensure that every entry in the School's admission register is preserved for six years beginning with the day on which the entry was made; and every back-up copy of the register is preserved for six years after the end of the school year that it relates to.

1.4 The admissions register contains specific personal details of every pupil in the School, including their date of admission, information regarding Parents and carers and details of the school they last attended.

1.5 A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted.[12]

1.6 Where the School notifies the local authority that the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the School must provide it with the following information:

1.6.1 the full name of the pupil;

1.6.2 the address of the pupil;

1.6.3 the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;

1.6.4 at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives or can be contacted in an emergency;

1.6.5 the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;

1.6.6 name of the pupil's other or future school and pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable;

[12] Schools must refer to regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 for full details of the legal grounds for deleting a pupil from the registers. See also chapter 7 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024.

1.6.7 the ground (prescribed in regulation 9) under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Appendix 3 Attendance register

1 Attendance register

1.1 The School records and monitors the attendance of all pupils in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024

1.2 The School uses the appropriate national attendance and absence codes system to enable it to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with regulation 10 of the Attendance Regulations.

1.3 The attendance register is kept electronically and a back-up copy of the register is made at least once a month in the form of an electronic or printed copy.

1.4 The School will also use these records to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) and work with pupils and Parents to resolve any issues before they become entrenched.

1.5 The School is required by law to take attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

1.6 On each occasion it will be recorded whether every pupil is:

1.6.1 physically present in school when the attendance register begins to be taken; or

1.6.2 absent from the school when the attendance register begins to be taken but attends before the taking of the register has ended; or

1.6.3 attending a place other than the school; or

1.6.4 absent.

1.7 The circumstances in which a pupil may be recorded as attending a place, other than the school, can include:

1.7.1 Attending educational provision arranged by a local authority;

1.7.2 For an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff;

1.7.3 Attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity;

1.7.4 Attending an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by the school as part of the pupil's education;

1.7.5 Attending a place for any other approved educational activity.

2 Recording absence

2.1 Absence will be recorded in accordance with the national absence codes set out in regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) (Regulations) 2024 and statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance relating to:

2.1.1 leaves of absence;

2.1.2 other authorised reasons;

2.1.3 unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause;

2.1.4 unauthorised absence.[13]

3 Remote education

3.1 The School is required to record all absence from in-person lessons.

3.2 The School may, in limited circumstances, provide remote education to enable pupils, who are well enough to learn but unable to attend the School site, to keep pace with their education.

3.3 In the limited circumstances when the School decides to use remote education for individual pupils when they are absent, the following will be considered:

3.3.1 ensuring mutual agreement of remote education by the School, Parents or carers, potentially pupils, and if appropriate a relevant medical professional. If the pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan or has a social worker, the local authority should also be involved in the decision;

3.3.2 if remote education is being used as part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, putting a formal arrangement in place to review its efficacy regularly, alongside identifying what other support and flexibilities can be put in place to help ease the pupil back to school at the earliest opportunity;

3.3.3 setting a time limit within which the period of remote education provision should be reviewed, with the aim that the pupil returns to in person education with the required support in place to meet their needs.

3.4 Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. The School will keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register. Where appropriate, this information may be used to make plans for a pupil's reintegration to school.

3.5 The School will utilise a digital education platform that will be kept up-to-date and keep pupils safe. Staff will remain trained and confident in its use.

4 Unauthorised absence

4.1 The "unauthorised absence" code will be used when prior permission for absence has not been given and where the School is not satisfied with the explanation given for absence or delayed attendance or where no explanation has been given meaning that the code for "unable to attend due to an exceptional circumstance" is not appropriate. Examples include:

4.1.1 holiday has not been authorised by the School or is in excess of the period determined by the AC or Head of the Junior School;

4.1.2 the reason for absence has not been provided;

4.1.3 a pupil is absent from school without authorisation;

[13] Schools should refer to regulation 10 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to ensure they are correctly recording reasons for absence and the applicable commentary in chapter 8 of the statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance 2024.

4.1.4 a pupil has arrived in school after registration has closed and without reasonable explanation.

Appendix 4: Attendance Codes

School Registration Codes

DfE Codes – as shown on iSAMS	Status	Symbol shown for parents on My School Portal
Present at morning session [/]	Present	✓
Present at afternoon session [\ ]	Present	✓
No Reason Yet Provided For Absence [N]	Unauthorised	⊗
Other Authorised Circumstances [C]	Authorised	C
Late (before registers closed) [L]	Present	L
Music Lesson / LAMDA [*]	Authorised	♫
Illness [I]	Authorised	🧳
Unauthorised Absence [O]	Unauthorised	⊘
Religious Observance [R]	Authorised	R
Family Holiday (NOT Agreed) [G]	Unauthorised	✈
Study Leave [S]	Authorised	✎
Late (After Registers Closed) [U]	Unauthorised	🕒
Excluded [E]	Authorised	👤×
Educational Visit or Trip [V]	Present	🚌
Approved Sporting Activity [P]	Present	⚽
Medical / Dental Appointments [M]	Authorised	🏥
Work Experience [W]	Authorised	💼
Pupil Not Yet On Roll [Z]	Exceptional	Z
Non-Compulsory School Age Absence [X]	Exceptional	👪
School Closed To Pupils [#]	Exceptional	⊗

Regulated Performance [C1]	Authorised
Temporary Reduced Timetable [C2]	Authorised
Employment / Educational Interview [J1]	Authorised
Educational Provision Arranged by LA [K]	Authorised
Lack of Access Arrangements by LA [Q]	Exceptional
Normal Transport Unavailable [Y1]	Exceptional
Widespread Travel Disruption [Y2]	Exceptional
Part of School Out of Use [Y3]	Exceptional
Session Cancelled – School Closed [Y4]	Exceptional
Subject to Sentence of Detention [Y5]	Exceptional
Infection or Disease [Y6]	Authorised
Other Unavoidable Cause [Y7]	Exceptional
Dual Registration [D]	Authorised
Educated Off Site [B]	Present
Traveller Absence [T]	Authorised
Unknown [-]	Unauthorised

For full detail of absence codes, see: Ch 8 (Contents of the Attendance Register) in **Working together to improve school attendance** (p76ff):
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance
See also:
Resources for families | Children's Commissioner for England (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

Appendix 5: Addressing Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) at The Portsmouth Grammar School

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a term referring to reduced or non-attendance at school by a child or young person.

Rather than the term 'school refusal', the term EBSA recognises that this avoidance has its source in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. A growing body of analysis suggests that EBSA should not be thought of as a deliberate act of defiance, but instead as a complex issue inextricably linked with mental health and wellbeing.

This guidance applies to pupils displaying social, emotional or mental health issue that is affecting their attendance. It is not only for pupils who have a diagnosed mental disorder, or a disability or special educational need.

As well as working on universal approaches to mental health and wellbeing, PGS recognises the importance of developing a planned process around EBSA for children and young people who require more targeted support.

The six-stage planned process below is aimed at providing guidance to school staff who have direct contact with the child. This will most likely be the child's Tutor or Head of Year (with oversight from the Deputy Head (Pastoral)). This guidance should also be shared with parents.

It is suggested that there is no more than 2 weeks within each stage before taking the necessary steps to move to the next (apart from stage 5 where progress is required to reach stage 6).

STAGE 1: (MEET WITH PUPIL) & PHONE CALL HOME

- Where the pupil is still in school with ≤ 90% attendance, school staff should meet with the pupil. This should be accompanied by a phone call home.
- Where a pupil is not in school at all, a phone call home on its own is appropriate.
- The conversations will aim to sensitively communicate the School's high expectations for the attendance, engagement with School and/or punctuality of pupils who are experiencing emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues (PGS Attendance Policy).
- The conversations will also aim to identify any potential risk factors the child is experiencing that might be contributing to their EBSA.

Potential EBSA risk factors (non-exhaustive list):

https://www.annafreud.org/media/17157/addressing-emotionally-based-school-avoidance.pdf (P3)

- The outcome of the phone call should be an increase in the pupil's % school attendance that is in line with the School's high expectations and/or engagement with identified risk factors.
- This may involve actioning any reasonable adjustments* agreed by all parties to overcome the specific barriers to attendance. Any reasonable adjustments or support put in place should ensure that the time the child spends in school is prioritised (DfE, Feb 2023). These will need to consider the individual circumstances of the child, being mindful of safeguarding responsibilities as set out in KCSiE (2024)

STAGE 2: FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE inviting parents (and pupil) into School for a meeting.

This should be a formal letter stating:

- This pupil continues to display EBSA
- Pupil's current attendance %
- Associated concerns / identified risks e.g. impact on attainment
- The School has a duty to challenge falling attendance and to address this with the pupil and family
- The School has a responsibility to make any reasonable adjustments* to alleviate specific barriers to attendance.
- Parents are invited in for a meeting to discuss the matter at their earliest convenience
- It is the preference that the pupil attends as any actions or reasonable adjustments* should be agreed by ALL parties and followed up in writing.

STAGE 3: PARENT/CARER MEETING AT PGS

- Further assess the pupils' EBSA and barriers to attendance
- Potential risk factors contributing
- Review current reasonable adjustments*
- Introduce further or adapt reasonable adjustments*(agreed by all parties)
- Reiterate to all that the priority must be working towards fully integrating the pupil back into School. A prolonged period of absence may heighten their anxiety about attending in future (DfE, Feb 2023).
- This meeting should be followed up in writing.

STAGE 4: HOME VISIT

A home visit will most likely be carried out by the pupil's Tutor and/or Head of Year. The meeting needs to be organised with the parents' prior consent.

- Further assess the pupils' EBSA and barriers to attendance
- Potential risk factors contributing
- Review current reasonable adjustments*
- Introduce further or adapt reasonable adjustments*(agreed by all parties)
- Reiterate to all that the priority must be working towards fully integrating the pupil back into School. A prolonged period of absence may heighten their anxiety about attending in future (DfE, Feb 2023).
- If the home visit exposes further risk factors or concerns for the pupil, an Early Help Referral may be appropriate, however, we reserve the right to make an Early Help or MASH referral at any point. We will always consult with parents before doing so.
- The home visit will always be followed up in writing.
-

STAGE 5: REGULAR MEETINGS (suggested fortnightly minimum)

Regular meetings should be in person and can take place in School or as home visits depending on the pupil's individual circumstances.

- Further assess the pupils' EBSA and barriers to attendance
- Potential risk factors contributing
- Review current reasonable adjustments*
- Introduce further/ adapt / begin to transition away from reasonable adjustments*(agreed by all parties)

- Reiterate to all that the priority must be working towards fully integrating the pupil back into School.
- Follow up in writing.

STAGE 6: FULL RE-INTEGRATION

- The pupil should be attending school regularly and in line with the School's high expectations as set out in the PGS Attendance Policy.
- There may still be some reasonable adjustments* in place to support this.
- The pupil will continue to be monitored carefully by Tutor and Head of Year; their % attendance and overall wellbeing accompanied by a weekly communication home (either email or telephone call).
- Depending on the length of time the pupil has been fully re-integrated, should the pupil start to display signs of EBSA again, it would be at the Head of Year's discretion as to which stage of the planned process is necessary to return to (determined by the pupil's individual circumstances).

NB. The Portsmouth Grammar School staff reserve the right to make an Early Help or MASH referral at any point. We will always consult with parents before doing so. Unless doing so is perceived to put to put the child at greater risk.

*Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes made to support people with disabilities or learning difficulties so they can participate in the same way as others. They are a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2010. In this context, reasonable adjustments are any actions taken to support attendance and should be agreed by all parties (DfE, July 2026).

Below is a non-exhaustive list for The Portsmouth Grammar School inspired by sector-led examples of the kinds of support and reasonable adjustments that schools have in place for EBSA. 'Support for pupils where a mental health issue is affecting attendance Effective practice examples', (DofE July, 2026)

- Staff take a bespoke approach to each child with an emphasis on breaking down barriers to attendance, so that children are ready to learn, feel safe and grow in confidence.
- Some pupils are offered a "meet and greet" at the school gate to support transition back into school after period of absence.
- Seating plans during lessons can be adapted to support with EBSA.
- Pupils can be withdrawn from lessons on a short-term basis and complete work on emotional regulation, to build their resilience and alleviate anxiety about attending school.
- Pupils can be provided with "Medical Exit" cards, that will allow them to avoid main transition times in corridors between classes and allows them to leave lessons and to go to their designated 'safe space'.
- A short period of phased timetabling to allow a transition back into School. This might allow the pupil to attend full-time but does not mean they attend all lessons. Providing support for the pupil (gently re-integrating them with their friends/peers) will be key here.
- Some pupils will sit exams in smaller examination venues e.g. smaller rooms of 1-10 pupils.
- Ear defenders may be provided to students who are particularly sensitive to noise. They wear these in and out of lessons as needed.
- Children with sensory difficulties are considered as part of the school uniform

policy, such as allowing them to wear shorts instead of trousers, which helps to alleviate anxiety about attending.

- Pupils are made aware that they can speak with anyone they have confidence in, and staff know that, where they need help, they should contact the pupil's Tutor, Head of Year or the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Pupils can be paired up with buddies/mentors from Y11/13 who have received specific training to support.
- Pupils are offered complimentary School counselling and 1-2-1 or group pastoral coach support
- Mental Health awareness days and sessions are arranged for pupils

Appendix 6: Whole-School Attendance Protocol

Purpose and Principles

The school recognises that attendance is fundamental to pupils' achievement, wellbeing, social development and safeguarding. We expect full attendance, punctuality and a strong partnership with parents/carers to ensure every pupil benefits from the education we provide. This protocol is based on the DfE statutory guidance "Working together to improve school attendance" (2026) and reflects current legislation for independent schools. It has been devised with the intention of ensuring consistency, transparency and supports early intervention, with a support-first approach and clear escalation when necessary.

Whole-School Culture and Shared Responsibility

- The school promotes good attendance (95%+) as part of its values and culture. While 95%+ is prescribed by the school as 'good', everyday counts, and pupils should attend school if it is open.
- Every member of staff is responsible for encouraging good attendance and raising concerns early.
- Clear roles are assigned (below), and parents/carers are partners in ensuring pupils attend regularly.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Senior Attendance Champion (whole school)	Leadership of attendance strategy; monitoring whole-school attendance data; evaluate effectiveness of attendance interventions; report to governance.
Junior School Deputy Head (Pastoral)	Monitoring JS attendance data
Attendance Officer	Daily register processing; initial contact; record-keeping; support communication.
Heads of Year (SS) / Phase Leaders (JS)	Follow-up on patterns of absence; support families; implement targeted action.
Tutors (SS)/ Form Teachers (JS)	Day-to-day expectations; encouragement; early flagging of concerns.
Senior Management Team (JS & SS)	Half Termly review of attendance data
Governors	Termly review of attendance data and strategy.

Attendance Monitoring and Thresholds

Attendance is reviewed regularly to identify patterns early.

Attendance Level	Meaning
95 – 100%	Good attendance
90 – 94.9%	Emerging concern
80 – 89.9%	Persistent absence
Below 80%	Significant absence concerns

Attendance percentages are accessible to parents of their own child(ren) on the Parent Portal. Pupils can view their own attendance data on the Pupil Portal. While we prescribe the above percentages as a guide, everyday counts and pupils should attend school when it is open.

Graduated Support Approach (GSA)

It is important that our approach to promoting attendance and challenging absence is **supportive and personalised** to the child and their family. For pupils achieving 95%+ attendance, the school's response should be praise and positive reinforcement.

Stage 1 – Early Concern (90 – 94.9%)

- Informal conversation with pupil and parents (Tutor/ Form Teacher).
- Exploration of any barriers
- Agreed strategies and monitoring

Stage 2 – Formal Support (80 – 89.9%)

- Attendance meeting(s) with Pupil, Parent and Tutor/Head of Year (SS) or Form Teacher/ Phase Leader (JS)
- Written support plan with clear targets
- Continued monitoring and review
- Review dates agreed (usually 2 weeks)

Stage 3 – Escalation (less than 80%)

- Attendance meeting(s) with Pupil, Parent, Senior Attendance Champion/JS Deputy Head (Pastoral) & Head of Year/Phase Leader
- Consider targeted interventions (mentor, counselling, adjusted timetable).
- Continued monitoring and review
- Review dates agreed (usually 2 weeks)

- Referral to Local Authority services (LA attendance service or MASH) may be considered if attendance does not improve and support is not engaged with. The school remains committed to **support first**, using statutory routes only where necessary.

NB. If an EBSA pupil, please refer to PGS EBSA guidance which is an appendix of the PGS Attendance Policy.
Depending on the family circumstances, the Senior Attendance Champion /may choose to meet with a family before they reach the % threshold for Stage 3 and a Head of Year/Phase Leader for Stage 2. In addition, given cumulative absence as a % becomes more meaningful over the course of the academic year, staff are encouraged to use their initiative when monitoring attendance and taking action (e.g. 2 days absence in week 1 will affect a pupil's % considerably). In agreement with the Senior Attendance Champion, moving averages can be utilised to track attendance where appropriate as well as tracking changes over time rather than only totals.

Recording, Data and Reporting

All communications and actions regarding the graduating support approach to attendance are logged on CPOMS.

Attendance data is reviewed half termly by SMT and termly by the PGS Governing Body to identify trends and evaluate interventions.

The school complies with regulatory requirements for registers and shares attendance information where statutory duties apply.