Attendance Policy 2026 2027

Context

1. In line with Buckinghamshire and National Guidance on attendance, Pace believes that attendance at school is vital in maximising a child's success at school and future life chances.

2. Pace therefore endeavours to ensure that all children of school age receive a full-time education which maximises their opportunity to realise their full potential.

3. Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

4. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

5. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

    5.1 Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
    5.2 Truancy before or during the school day
    5.3 Absences which have never been properly explained
    5.4 Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark without prior knowledge
    5.5 Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
    5.6 Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been pre-agreed on an individual basis

6. At Pace, staff will work closely with families to ensure that children attend school and arrive punctually. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends the school to which they are registered.

7. In order to ensure efficient communication and record keeping, the following procedures will be followed. The Parent Handbook and online parent hub information sets out the parental role in following these procedures.

8. Parents are asked to give notice in advance of known absences, for example medical appointments.

9. In the case of a child's illness, Pace Reception should be informed as early as possible on 01296 392739 (students at Coventon Road) or 01296 614287 students at Wendover Road) at 8.30am, no later than 8.45am, either by telephone or using Bromcom.

10. Requests by parents for taking children out of school for family holidays MUST be made on the official request form and submitted to the Headteacher. Families are discouraged from taking children out of school for the purposes of a holiday and permission is given only at the discretion of the Headteacher. However, we recognise the particular challenges faced by families of children and young people attending

Pace, and will normally authorise absence for family holidays providing that the period of absence:

10.1 Does not exceed 10 school days in any one school year,
10.2 and that the procedures for requesting absence are followed giving a minimum of 2 weeks, and preferably one month's notice

11. A register of attendance is taken twice per day. A note is made of a pupil's absence and the reason for it, if known. Where the reason for lateness or absence is unknown, a phone call will be made immediately to the parents to ascertain when the child will be arriving or returning to school, and the reason for lateness.

12. The register will be taken at the following times: 9am register opens, 9.30am register closes. Any arrivals after 9.30am are marked as late unless a prior arrangement has been made with the family based on their individual circumstances. Afternoon register opens at 12.30pm and closes at 1pm.

13. School groups are asked to make sure that all registers are updated on Bromcom twice daily.

14. For students attending approved educational or sports activities off site during the school day as part of their enhanced curriculum for example gym/horse riding/hydrotherapy, staff are required to draw a line horizontally across the middle of the half day session and use the code P for the activity at the top of the box if they are there first thing and then use the bottom half of the box to mark them as present when they arrive (this will ensure the register is up to date in the event of an evacuation between the time of arrival (e.g. mid morning) and when the afternoon register takes place). The same applies for an afternoon activity, using the bottom half of the box for the later timeslot.

15. Pace staff are aware that the register is a legal document and must be completed accurately in line with our attendance policy twice a day. It must be completed online.

16. Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for a variety of reasons. If a child is reluctant to attend school parents are encouraged to speak directly to a member of the staff team so that we can take steps to resolve the problem as quickly as possible and support your child accordingly.

17. In the case of an unauthorised absence, Pace is required to inform the pupil's placing authority and make them aware of the details. Parents should be aware that unauthorised absence may place their child's placement at risk lead and could lead to the placing authority taking legal action against them.

18. On occasions, children who attend Pace may have a prolonged period of absence due to illness or surgery. In these cases, Pace staff will establish prior to planned surgery, when and how the pupil will return to Pace, working with the parents and other agencies as required.

19. In all cases of prolonged absence Pace staff will offer to visit the child in hospital and/or at home and maintain regular contact with the family to monitor progress. Educational and therapeutic input will be offered dependent on the individual circumstances and the wellness of the child.

20. If Pace staff have any concerns about a child's frequent or persistent absence from school, the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Team will be contacted, or the equivalent team in the relevant local education authority if this is not Buckinghamshire. See Child Protection Policy.

Date: October 2026

Review Date: October 2027

To be reviewed by: Headteacher