# Secondary School Pupil Attendance Policy

**This policy is applicable to the Wonder Learning Partnership (WLP)**

**Important:** This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the school website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.

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| **Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:** | LGC & Board of Trustees |
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## Introduction

**The importance of school attendance**

'Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn.'

Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Wonder Learning Partnership (WLP) recognises the importance of high attendance and the subsequent impact low rates of attendance have on progress and outcomes. We have an ongoing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across the school community. At WLP, improving rates of attendance is seen as everyone's responsibility but we acknowledge that a culture of high attendance is driven by determined and resolute leadership.

This policy meets the requirements of the Working Together to improve School Attendance guidance document, published May 2022 and its successor (applicable from August 2024[1]).

Our framework should be read in conjunction with the following key guidance documents:

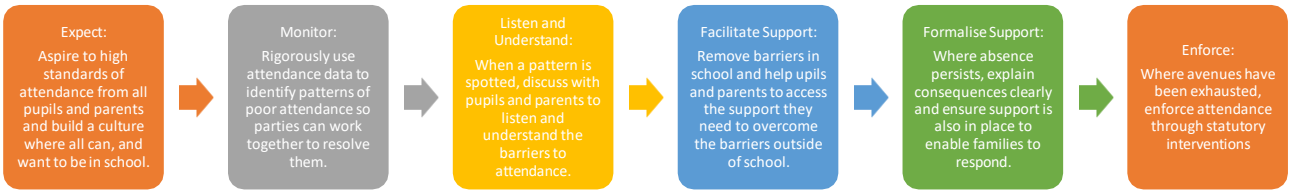
- Mental health issues affecting pupils' attendance - guidance for schools: Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK[2]
- Ofsted's attendance research - Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence: Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence - GOV.UK[3]

Although our framework is sympathetic to the challenges pupils and parents face, our approach is underpinned by the following requirements:

- It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child 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.
- Data supports that view that improved attendance drives up academic attainment. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment

[1] Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)
[2] Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK
[3] Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence - GOV.UK

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:




**Who is this policy for?**

- All school and WLP academy Trust colleagues, headteachers, governors and Trustees
- Parents and carers

For the purpose of this framework, a parent means:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

**Aims**

WLP is committed to treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home and in school. We will therefore work in partnership with families to:

- **Expect** - consistently promote the benefits of good attendance at school, set high expectations for every pupil and communicate these expectations to pupils and parents, building a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn.
- **Monitor** - rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
- **Listen and understand** - build strong relationships with families and when a pattern is spotted, we will discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
- **Facilitate support** - we will seek to remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.
- **Formalise support** - Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, school will explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.
- **Enforce** - Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, school will enforce attendance through statutory interventions or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and the most effective schools recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. Schools that have good attendance recognise that it is not a discrete piece of work but rather it is an integral part of the school's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance, we will:

- articulate a clear vision for attendance improvement
- evaluate and monitor expectations and processes
- oversee data analysis
- communicate messages to pupils and parent
- make sure all teaching and non-teaching colleagues know the importance of good attendance
- be consistent in our communication with pupils and parents
- ensure that colleagues receive the training and professional development they need
- ensure attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced, including where applicable through effective use of pupil premium funding
- where possible this will include attendance or pastoral support colleagues (either school based or contracted) who can work with families, conduct home visits and work in partnership with school leaders, the local authority's School Attendance Support Team and other partners.
- set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels. In doing so, our schools will help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development. It will also include clarity on the short and long-term consequences of poor attendance.
- visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance throughout school life. This may include in displays, assemblies or in registration periods. This may also include praising and rewarding improvements in attendance at year group, class/form and individual level.
- recognise that attendance is never 'solved' and is a continuous process by regularly reviewing and updating messages, processes, and strategies.
- recognise 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.

Each setting will have a **designated senior leader** with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school. In some cases, this may also be the headteacher.

## Trust Analysis Tool

Key to the WLP attendance framework is the robust analysis of attendance patterns on a regular basis. In this context, regular means a fortnightly analysis of attendance data. This analysis will be led by a designated senior leader, identified by the headteacher. In some instances, particularly in the primary phase, this may be the headteacher themselves.

The Trust has developed its own, internal tracking system, which enables leaders to quickly analyse and identified trends and patterns of attendance. Filtering functions allow leaders to

diligently analyse pupils who fall into various, vulnerable categories, such as SEND or disadvantaged pupils every two weeks.

Arbor will be used to generate the information required for the 'absence management meeting'. In some schools, this meeting will be held as part of the regular SLT meeting, in other schools, leaders may choose to hold this as a separate meeting.

Discussions will focus on the data generated through Arbor. Leaders should focus their discussions, in the first instance on the target pupils based on criteria below and in the order below:

- Pupils currently PA (<90%) or significantly PA (<70%) – including sub groups (SEND/DIS)
- Pupils at risk of PA (90%-95%) – including sub groups (SEND/DIS)
- Pupils who fall into neither of the categories above but show a declining attendance trend. –
- including sub groups (SEND/DIS)
- Other pupils based on local intelligence held within school. This may be:
    - Social media information
    - Discussions with pupils and families themselves
    - Monitoring undertaken by the class teachers / heads of department.

**Intensified Analysis and Rapid Response**
During known high-risk periods (for example September–October and immediately after school holidays), attendance analysis will take place weekly. Any actions arising from this analysis will be agreed and initiated within five school days.
Attendance communications will reference days missed and lessons missed as well as percentages.
Analysis must explicitly track movement between STEP stages to ensure that risk is identified early and intervention is consistent.

**Where pupil attendance is a cause for concern, this should be logged and the attendance policy followed**.

## Attendance and the law

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education
The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child 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.

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms. This includes crime (90% of young offenders had been persistently absent) and serious violence (83% of knife possession offenders had been persistently absent in at least 1 of the 5 years of study).

## Roles and responsibilities

**Leadership and management**

- Offer a clear vision for attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values, which are communicated to and understood by colleagues, pupils and families.
- Make sure colleagues, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe.
- Expect good attendance and punctuality from all members of the school community and make sure that pupils understand its importance.
- Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. Empower colleagues to take responsibility for attendance.
- Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement. Make sure it is resourced appropriately (including through effective use of pupil premium funding) to create, build and maintain systems and performance.
- Have a designated attendance champion in the senior leadership team with clearly assigned responsibilities which are identified within the attendance framework, escalation of procedures and school improvement plan.
- Make sure colleagues receive professional development and support to deploy attendance systems effectively.
- Local Governance Committees (LGC's) should have an accurate view of school attendance and
- engage in escalation procedures where appropriate.

**School and Trust leaders will**

- Use clear and consistently applied systems and processes to improve, reward and incentivise attendance and address absences. Ensuring these systems are inclusive and appropriate for all pupils.
- Ensure escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that every colleague knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Implement robust school systems provide useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups such as:
    - children who have a social worker including looked-after children
    - young carers
    - children who are eligible for free school meals

    - children who speak English as a second language
    - children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues. This includes raising concerns with other agencies like children's social care and early help services which are working with families.
- Attendance leads will provide regular reports to school and Trust colleagues to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures, where necessary.

**Senior Leadership Roles for Attendance**

Each school will appoint a Senior Attendance Champion (SAC) with whole-school oversight of attendance strategy, data, monitoring and impact. The SAC ensures attendance is embedded within school improvement, safeguarding culture and professional development. Attendance is central to helping pupils achieve, belong and thrive, and sits within a positive safeguarding culture. Leaders will model and promote this culture in all communications with colleagues, pupils and families.

Schools will use the Trust's STEP toolkit as the operational model for attendance improvement and escalation.

WLP has ultimate responsibility for ensuring due regard to guidance and compliance with the law on school attendance. We will therefore ensure that:

- School leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- This framework is made available through Trust and school websites so that it is accessible to pupils, parents and colleagues.
- Effective practice is shared across Trust schools. Support will be tailored to the needs of each individual school and the barriers to attendance pupils experience as identified through detailed analysis of school level attendance data.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends, and help our school leaders to focus on improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Schools will record attendance accurately in the register and share the required information with DfE and local authorities.

We are committed to working effectively with local partners to help remove the barriers to attendance that go beyond the school gates, including building strong links with local statutory services (including social care, health and police) and the voluntary and community sector.

The Trust Board and LGCs will provide support and challenge to our schools around current trends on attendance in the school community, by:

- Regularly reviewing attendance data at meetings. This will include thorough examination of recent and historic trends at a school level as well as benchmarking to comparator schools within the Trust, local authority area, region and nationwide.
- Develop and maintain a single point of truth, for attendance tracking so that all leaders have access to Arbor in order to support their analysis of attendance patterns.
- Automate reporting, as far as possible, to mitigate workload requirements for senior leaders.

- Pay particular attention to attendance of pupil cohorts within our schools that have historically had poor attendance or that face entrenched barriers to attendance. This will be specific to the school's context, but may include pupils who have a social worker, are from a background or ethnicity where attendance has historically been low, have a long-term medical condition, special educational needs or a disability, or are eligible for free school meals.
- Work with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those focus areas.
- In addition, where a school is struggling with their attendance, the Trust/LGC will work with school leaders to develop a comprehensive attendance action plan to improve attendance. This will be evaluated and reviewed regularly. This may form part of a wider school improvement plan, including where appropriate school-to-school support from system leaders.
- Termly attendance review meetings with each individual school may be held or we may ask schools to report on their attendance at defined intervals throughout the academic year.

**Ensuring school colleagues receive adequate training on attendance**
Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard pupils. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school colleagues require to address them.

The Wonder Learning Partnership will therefore ensure that:

- Training on attendance is included in the schools' continued professional development offer for all colleagues, and that attendance is covered in any Trust wide induction packs. As a minimum this will include all colleagues understanding:
- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances,
- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers,
- the school/Trusts' strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance,
- and the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

Dedicated attendance training will be provided to any colleague with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support colleague and senior leaders.

In addition, this should include:

- the necessary skills to generate, interpret and analyse attendance data,
- and any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

**Training and Governance Reporting**

All colleagues will receive annual STEP training, including Early Help processes, EBSA support, attendance systems and legal responsibilities.
The Trust will publish an Annual Attendance Training Plan setting out the training available to all settings.
Schools will provide a termly Attendance Data Pack to LGCs and the Trust Board, including:

- Persistent and severe absence trends
- Movement between STEP stages
- Interventions undertaken and their impact
- Punctuality patterns
- Any use of part-time timetables and the review outcomes

**Working together to improve attendance**

## EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all students, pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school

## MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched

## LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

## FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help students, pupils, and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or a whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

## FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persist and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

## ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil/student ’s right to an education.

**Expectations of our schools**

- To manage and improve attendance effectively, all schools will:
- develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- follow the attendance framework which all colleagues, pupils and parents understand.
- accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and as a family of effective schools we recognise the importance of developing good patterns of attendance from the outset. Our school leaders understand that good attendance is not a discrete piece of work but rather it is an integral part of the school's ethos and culture. In building a culture of good school attendance, our schools:

- Recognise the importance of good attendance and, alongside good behaviour, make it a central part
- of the school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life.
- Recognise the interplay between attendance and wider school improvement efforts, building it into strategies on attainment, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, supporting pupils with medical conditions or disabilities, safeguarding, wellbeing, and support for disadvantaged pupils/students (including use of pupil premium).
- Recognise improving attendance is a school leadership issue and have a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school.
- Responsibilities include offering a clear vision for attendance improvement, evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes, oversight of data analysis, and communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Make sure all teaching and non-teaching colleagues know the importance of good attendance, are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents, and receive the training and professional development they need.
- Make sure attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced, including where applicable through effective use of pupil premium funding. Where possible this includes attendance or pastoral support colleagues (either school based or contracted) who can work with families, conduct home visits and work in partnership with school leaders, the local authority's School Attendance Support Team and other partners.
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils and

communicate these regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels. In doing so, our schools help parents to understand what is expected of them and why attendance is important to their child's attainment, wellbeing, and wider development. It will also include clarity on the short- and long- term consequences of poor attendance.

- Visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance throughout school life. This will include in displays, assemblies or in registration periods. Where used sensitively and without discrimination, this may also include praising and rewarding improvements in attendance at year group, class/form and individual level.
- Recognise that attendance is never 'solved' and is a continuous process by regularly reviewing and updating messages, processes, and strategies.
- Recognise 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.

**Expectations of our Parents**

**Parents/Carers should:**

- Establish good attendance habits by acting as a role model and showing the children that good attendance and punctuality is important.
- Praise and reward good attendance: even small successes, e.g. getting ready quickly, even if resisting going to school.
- Talk regularly with their child about school and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to want to attend and learn if they feel supported and their anxieties are listened to.
- Contact the school by phone, text, email or letter as soon as possible to say why their child is absent and when they are expected to return.
- To ensure that when the child returns to school after their absence they provide written of explanation for the absence if the individual schools guidance requires this.
- Only grant days at home for genuine illness.
- Make alternative arrangements to take their child to school if unable to do so themselves, e.g. if the
- child's sibling is unwell.
- Avoid taking holidays in school time unless in line with 'exceptional circumstances' which are:-
- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or
- child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of the above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the principal education welfare

officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent. The principal education welfare officer will discuss each case with an independent Headteacher and will make a recommendation to the referring school.
- Ensure that wherever possible, medical appointments are made outside of the school day.
- Know routines of the school day to avoid issues, e.g. ensuring children have their PE kits on the right days.
- Establish a good bedtime routine, so that their child can sleep well, get enough sleep and make mornings less of a struggle.

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available. We recognise that this differs, dependent on the age of the pupil.

**SEND and Medical Needs**
Reasonable adjustments will be agreed promptly and recorded within the pupil's STEP Support Plan.
Schools will not routinely request medical evidence. Proportionate evidence may be requested only where there is reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.
For any pupil entering STEP Transition or above, the SENDCo will contribute to planning, support and review.

**Expectations of the pupils (Year N to Year 6)**
All pupils will:
- Understand how important attendance is to their learning.
- Arrive at school on time, ready to learn.
- Respect themselves and others.
- Be confident to tell colleagues when they are feeling unwell.
- Contribute to the smooth running of the school day through high standards of behaviour.

**Expectations of pupils/students (in Years 7 to 13)**
All pupils/students will:
- Ensure that they attend school and are on time.
- Be aware of their current attendance record and targets.
- Be aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy.
- Arrive to lessons punctually.
- Not leave school without permission.
- Follow correct procedures for known absences.
- Respect themselves and others.
- Encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied or feel unhappy in school.

**Targets, attendance and punctuality:**
Targets for overall attendance and punctuality are set out within the Trust Key Performance

Indicators.

- Leaders have established high expectations of pupils' attendance.
- Systems to tackle poor attendance are robust and having a positive impact on the attendance of all groups of pupils. Consequently, school attendance tracks 2% above local averages or 3% above national averages (whichever is higher). Where this is not the case, attendance is climbing for all groups of pupils.
- Only those pupils with medical needs are below the trust set attendance thresholds
- Close liaison with families and external agencies ensures that weaknesses in pupil attendance are quickly identified and addressed.
- No pupils are disadvantaged by weak attendance.

| Attendance during one school year | Equivalent days | Equivalent session | Equivalent weeks | Equivalent lessons missed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 95% | 9 days | 18 sessions | 2 weeks | 54 lessons |
| 90% | 19 days | 38 sessions | 4 weeks | 114 lessons |
| 85% | 29 days | 58 sessions | 6 weeks | 174 lessons |
| 80% | 38 days | 72 sessions | 8 weeks | 228 lessons |
| 75% | 48 days | 96 sessions | 10 weeks | 288 lessons |
| 70% | 57 days | 114 sessions | 11.5 weeks | 342 lessons |
| 65% | 67 days | 134 sessions | 13.5 weeks | 402 lessons |

**The impact of poor attendance on academic progress**

- If your child misses school on a regular basis, they are damaging their future life choices. Nationally, it has been proven that children with poor attendance in primary school miss out on making the expected progress in vital literacy and numeracy skills and find it difficult to catch up. In secondary school, 19 days' absence correlates, on average, to a grade at GCSE in all subjects.

## Procedures

All our schools have in place a coherent system of rigorously monitoring pupil/student attendance. Class teachers, subject tutors, form tutors, middle leaders, senior leaders, home link officers and the Education Welfare Officer all play key roles in this system and SIMS is used to manage this information.

If a telephone call from parents/carers is not forthcoming, then the absence will be treated as unauthorised. If no contact has been made by the parents/carers by day 3 (at the very latest) of the absence, the Home Link Officer, the Education Welfare Officer or a colleague will visit the home of the pupil/student. This will be an opportunity to explain the possible consequences of a fine if attendance does not improve. If there is a history of poor attendance, the visit may be earlier.

Children's Social Care will be contacted by a member of the Safeguarding team on the first day of an unexplained absence for any child with a Child Protection or Child In Need Plan.

If a pupil/student is absent for three consecutive days (and contact has been made from home), contact will be made with home to gauge when the pupil/student will be returning to the academy and to arrange for missed work to be sent home, if appropriate.

At the end of the week, an unauthorised absence report is generated and a letter/email asking for an explanation will be sent home. The list of pupils/students with unauthorised absences is also printed and passed to the middle leader/year group leader/key stage leader with responsibility for the cohort.

If there is a suspected pattern developing in the absences of a particular pupil/student, or group of pupils/students, then a registration certificate can be printed from SIMS. This is a record of attendance for the whole year, and it is sent home periodically in the pupils/student's annual report for parents' information. It is a confidential document and, therefore, should be kept carefully and only shown to the pupil/student (at secondary schools) and/or their parents/carers.

**The STEP Graduated Response**
The Trust uses a graduated response aligned to national expectations (expect → monitor → listen → support → formalise → enforce).

| DfE Stage | Trust STEP Stage |
|---|---|
| Expect / Monitor | Spotlight |
| Listen & Understand / Facilitate Support | Transition |
| Formalise Support | Escalated |
| Multi-agency Support / Pre-Legal / Legal | Partnership |

**Medical and dental appointments**
Every effort should be made for these to be outside school hours. Any urgent medical and dental appointments must be authorised by completing the 'Request for Medical Leave of Absence' form which is available from the school office (attached as Appendix A) If the absence is authorised, parents / carers must ensure they collect the pupil/student from visitors'/main reception as no pupil/student will be allowed out of the school unaccompanied. Parents/carers of secondary aged pupils/students must also ensure that their child is aware of the appointment and is ready waiting at the authorised time. It is not the responsibility of the school to inform pupils/students of appointments. In emergency situations, we will ensure the pupil/student is aware of the appointment. In any other circumstances, the pupil/student has to make their own way to reception at the authorised time.

If analysis of pupil absence identifies repeated medical/dental appointments, without just cause, leaders may request copies of medical appointments before authorising the absence.

**Pupils/Students who are late**
Late to school is defined as pupils/students not being in registration when the register is taken. At Secondary, if a pupil/student arrives after 9.30am then an unauthorised absence code of 'U' will be applied to the register. At Primary the same code will be issued if the

child arrives after 9am (difference in time due to registration times). We ask that all pupils/students are in the school building no later than 10 minutes before the official start time so that they can get prepared and organised for the learning that day.

The Attendance Officer will send a text message or make a phone call to parents/carers informing them when their child is late. In our secondary schools, lateness results in a same-day correction in line with the behaviour framework.

**Persistent Absence (PA)**

Definitions used in this policy

**Persistent Absence (PA): attendance below 90%.**
**Severe Absence: attendance below 50%.**

Escalation: Severe absence cases will move immediately to STEP Escalated or STEP Partnership. A multi-agency planning meeting must take place within 10 school days for all severe absence cases.

Any pupil/student who has an overall attendance of **below 90%** is considered to be in the persistent absence category **(for whatever reason).** Any pupil/student who is persistently absent (PA) will be monitored and placed on an action plan. This will be co-constructed with parents/carers.

Where pupils/students miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), the school and local authority is expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils/students.

An Education Welfare Officer will be assigned and meet with pupils/students, and their families whose attendance causes concern. Where necessary, home visits will be made. In situations of persistent truanting, a parent / carer may be fined.

### Attendance and Safeguarding

Trust school pay due regard to their statutory duties, as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Where absence is linked to safeguarding concerns, a timely referral will be made to the Local Authority so that safeguarding actions can be completed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be notified on the same day when pupils reach STEP Escalated or STEP Partnership.

Schools will prioritise first-day calling for pupils open to Early Help, Child in Need or Child Protection.
The Senior Attendance Champion and DSL will meet monthly to review all pupils who are persistently or severely absent.

In all cases, schools and local authorities are expected to make patterns of both persistent and severe absence a focus of their regular data monitoring and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible. Both persistent and severe absence should also be central to school, Trust, and local authority level strategies for improving attendance.

**Religious leave of absence**
For a day set aside exclusively for religious observance, pupils/students will be granted one day for each occasion of religious observance with a maximum of 3 days over one academic year. These absences, if granted, must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. They will be recorded as authorised using the 'R' code on SIMS and will be authorised. If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day using this code; the rest of the time would need a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

**Registers**
The attendance register is a legal document which must be completed fully and on time at AM and PM registration and then for every lesson throughout the day. Should a pupil/student not be in registration, they should be marked absent; however, if form tutors are aware of any appointments elsewhere, in or out of academy, these should be recorded using the relevant code. All academies follow the Department for Education guidance on the use of attendance codes and do not deviate from this.

**Understanding type of absence**
Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why the cause of absence is always required, preferably in writing. It is the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil/student 's absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

**Granting Leave of Absence**
We are clear that authorised absences are limited to a very select number of exceptional circumstances. We will actively restrict leave of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA).
- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend

school as part of that timetable.

- Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

**Protocols for Part-Time Timetables**

Part-Time Timetables will be considered only at STEP Partnership, after reasonable adjustments have been attempted, recorded and reviewed.
PTTs must be strictly time-limited and reviewed at least every two weeks.
Any extension must be agreed with renewed senior leader approval and parental consent.
Equality Act reasonable adjustments must always be explored and trialled before a PTT is put in place.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents/carers will be classified as authorised.

**Unauthorised absence**
Unauthorised absences are those that the Trust school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or enforcement proceedings. This includes:
Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
Truancy during the school day.
Absences which have never been properly explained.
Children who arrive at school too late to get a registration mark or who fail to sign in.
Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
Day trips and holidays during term time.
Absence from individual lessons – should your child be present for registration but then fail to attend subsequent lessons (without permission) school reserves the right to amend the register code for the school session to unauthorised to reflect lesson absence. In the event of this happening parents/carers would be notified on the same school day.

**Absence Procedures**
**If your child is absent, you must:**

- Contact us (telephone/email) as soon as possible on the first day of absence; **preferably by 8:30am**, and each subsequent day unless your child is admitted to hospital or has a long-term medical condition that is already documented by the school.

**If your child is absent for 5 consecutive days, you must:**

- **Consult with a medical practitioner** and provide evidence. This can include a

practitioner note, appointment card and/or labelled medication.

**If your secondary aged child is absent, we will:**

- Text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you by 9.30am. If there is no response from home, we will then telephone to establish the reason for the absence.
- Telephone you again the following day if the absence persists. If we are unable to contact you by telephone, we will write to you.
- Parents/carers at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice will be asked to attend an attendance meeting to try to prevent further absence leading to prosecution.

**If your primary aged child is absent, we will:**

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you by 9am. If there is no response from home, we will then email to establish the reason for the absence.
- Telephone you again the following day if the absence persists. If we are unable to contact you by telephone, we will write to you.
- Parents/carers at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice will be asked to attend an attendance meeting to try to prevent further absence leading to prosecution.

**We may:**

- Visit your home if your child has historically low rates of attendance or we hold safeguarding concerns, to establish the reason for absence. A home visit will be made for all pupils/students if there has been no contact and the unauthorised absence has exceeded three days.
- Invite you into an Attendance Meeting to discuss the situation with the Attendance Officer. Should your child's absence remain a concern, you will be invited in to meet with your child's Head of Lower, Upper or Sixth Form/Year Leader/ Assistant Headteacher/Attendance Officer in charge of Attendance (whichever is appropriate to the school setting)
- Refer the matter to our Designated Senior Leader and/or the Local Authority if attendance moves below **90%.**

## Management and enforcement

**Where attendance issues need to be escalated**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to assist colleagues in resolving any problems together.

The Attendance Office/Lead, Pastoral Heads of Year/Care and Achievement (Secondary) and a Designated Senior Leader who will always be happy to meet with you to discuss any concerns you have or that have been identified by school colleagues.

Where there are concerns regarding attendance, the school will use the staged escalation system highlighted below:

- **Stage one** – A letter will be sent to inform parents/carers informing parents of our concerns and making clear that we are applying stage one of the attendance

framework due to concerns about attendance of the child. A short timeframe will be allowed for attendance concerns to be rectified. This will be instigated if a pupil is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee, i.e. attendance at or below 95%.

- **Stage two** – Attendance has not improved – a phone call from the school will be made and will be followed by a formal letter to parents/carers. This will outline the school's major concerns in relation to the absence of the child. Advice will be given at this point that further absences will result in further interventions. Parents/carers made aware of our systems and how we can support to try to solve the problem. The importance of medical evidence will be discussed to allow us to authorise any absence.
- **Stage three** – A third letter is sent informing the parents/carers offering an attendance meeting with at school. At this meeting, an attendance contract will be completed and signed by all. A process of further monitoring will ensue.
- **Stage four** – Attendance has not improved, a follow up meeting will be arranged after a fourth letter is sent, we will also offer Early Help via Children's Social Care at this stage.
- **Stage five** – If Early Help is refused or attendance does not improve with further support, a referral to the Local Authority will be completed by the school.

If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer the child, firstly to our Attendance Officer before the Education Support Services (ESS), a statutory intervention service.

**Punctuality**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and is also an offence in law if your child attends school after the close of register.

If your child is late at the start of the school day, they can miss valuable learning time. They are prevented from spending time with their tutor/teacher which can result in vital information and news for the day not being received.

Late arriving pupils/students also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the pupil/student and can, in our experience, also encourage absence.

Good routines within the home are essential to assist pupils/students in establishing and maintaining punctuality, we rely on parents/carers to assist their children in formulating routines and any difficulties that parents/parents have should be brought to the school's attention.

**How we manage lateness**

The school day starts at

- Woldgate School: 8:50am
- Longcroft School: 8.45am

- Stamford Bridge Primary School: 8.30am
- Pocklington Junior School: 8.30am
- Melbourne Primary School: 8.30am

We expect your child to be in class at that time.

At **09.00am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an **unauthorised absence.**

If your child has a persistent late record the following deterrents will be escalated. You will be asked to meet with a school colleague and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but please contact us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

**Secondary Schools operate the following procedures as a deterrent to pupils/students:**

- **At Woldgate**: Pupils arriving after 8:45am must sign in at pupil reception with the Attendance and Wellbeing Coordinator. Pupils arriving late without a reasonable excuse, verifiable by their parent or carer, will receive a 1-hour detention after school at the next available session.
- **At Longcroft:** Pupils who arrive after 8:45 are recorded as late and issued with a C1 comment on ClassCharts.

**Managing illness during the school day**

If a student/pupil is unwell or has an accident and is considered unfit to continue in lessons, they will go to the main reception for their condition to be assessed. Where necessary parents/carers will be contacted and asked to make arrangements to collect their child.

Only in exceptional circumstances and where authorised by a parent/carer, pupils/students will be allowed to make their own way home.

We will still require parents to contact school the following day if their child is still absent.

If a child needs to leave school to attend a medical appointment, they need to sign out/by signed out at the main office. This will only be allowed with prior acknowledgement by parent/carer.

**Missing from Class**

If a pupil/student is missing (pupils who register at school in the morning and then go missing during the school day without a satisfactory explanation).

**Missing – Definition**

When a pupil's whereabouts cannot be established and/or where the circumstances are out of character, or the context suggests the person may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.

**Immediate Class Teacher Action**

On discovering a child is not in your lesson and (for Secondary) where there is indication that they were in previous lessons and there is no indication on the register that they are somewhere else, or there is no email record of a school event taking place in which the child is taking part.

**The class teacher should:**

- Contact/Email Attendance Officer and Assistant Headteacher in charge of Attendance and cc Head of Year/Headteacher as appropriate in the individual school.

**Attendance Officer will**: (as appropriate to the individual school)

- Check medical colleagues to see if the child has reported there.
- Check if the child has been signed out.
- Contact a Senior Leader.

**Senior Leader will:**

- Co-ordinate a search of the school site.

**Missing**

Once a pupil/student is identified as missing (the child is no longer on site), the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Senior Leader (Headteacher/Deputy/Assistant Head) will be informed.

Safeguarding colleagues will use professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the students'/pupil's whereabouts before notifying the police. Timeframe should be on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance Officer will contact home and report the child missing from site. Colleagues should inform parents/guardians that it is school protocol to inform the police.

School colleagues should urge parents/guardians to contact the pupil via their mobile phone and report information back to the school.

**Notifying the Police**

Safeguarding Leads will contact the Police to assist in locating and the returning the pupil to a safe environment. While the search is ongoing, the school will continue to liaise with the Police.

**Holidays in Term Time**

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's learning as much as any other absence and we expect
parents to help us by not taking pupils/students out of school during the academic year.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 No 756

Clarification state that leave of absence shall not be granted by schools unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

We are clear that authorised absences are limited to a very select number of exceptional circumstances. We will actively restrict leave of absence to the specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad: in line with a licence issued by a local authority or Justice of the Peace or a body of persons approval (BOPA).
- Attending an interview: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.
- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. All applications for leave in the school year will only be authorised for special/exceptional circumstances (at the discretion of the Head teacher). All applications must be made in writing to the Head Teacher at least five school days prior to the requested leave date.

Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parents/ carers in writing.

On any occasion that a school refuses a request for leave in term time, should parent/ carers proceed with the leave it will be recorded as a **G** (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on school's register. Failure to notify and/ or request leave of absence in term time, providing at least five-day notice will result in all absence being recorded as **O** (unauthorised absence not covered by any other description).

Should parents proceed with a term time holiday contrary to this framework, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised holiday and will result in referral to the local authority for their consideration to issue enforcement proceedings.

**Managing Reintegration**

From time to time, it is necessary to reintegrate pupils/students who have been experiencing problems, school colleagues will identify if and when this is appropriate.

Where this is agreed with parent/carer and pupil/student , the Pastoral and possibly the SEND team will play an integral part in managing such practice.

Where a reduced timetable is agreed with parents/carers as a solution to absence and/or truancy, an agreement will be drawn up which will require the signatures of all parties. Any period of the school day that a pupil/student is identified as not being required to attend will be recorded as authorised absence, however where a pupil/student fails to attend the required session, the whole day will be recorded as unauthorised absence and the Attendance Officer will be informed.

Schools reserve the right to withdraw any reintegration programme at any time.

**Education off school site**
On occasion, pupils/students may be involved in educational activities off the school site.

Any provision agreed that requires attendance at another site will still be reflected within schools register.

Failure to attend any other educational activity will result in an absence on the school register. The coding of the absence will depend on the explanation provided by parents.

**Summary**
Schools have a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All Trust/school colleagues are committed to working with parents/carers and pupils/students as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

**Retaining and amending registers**
Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to improve attendance. Schools are expected to use an electronic management information system to keep their attendance and admission registers to improve accuracy, speed up the process of sharing and analysing information, and make returns to local authorities and DfE easier.

Registers are legal records and all schools must preserve every entry in the attendance or admission register for 3 years from the date of entry. As the attendance register is a record of the pupils present at the time it was taken, the register should only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, all schools must ensure the register shows the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name and title of the person who made the amendment.

**Granting leaves of absence**
Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

**Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance**

**and work with families to remove them:**

- Schools should treat all pupils and parents with dignity and colleagues should model respectful relationships to build a positive relationship between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance.
- In communicating with parents, schools should discuss the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing, and challenge parents' views where they have misconceptions about what 'good' attendance looks like.
- Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance, it is important that the best placed person in the school works with and supports the family and wherever possible the person should be kept consistent.

Where a pattern of absence is at risk of becoming, or becomes, problematic schools should draw on these relationships and listen to and understand the barriers to attendance the pupil or family is experiencing. In doing so, schools should take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

**In the first instance, all schools are expected to:**

- Support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. As a minimum, this should include meeting with pupils and parents at risk of persistent or severe absence to understand barriers to being in school and agreeing actions or interventions to address them. This may include referrals to services and organisations that can provide support. These actions should be regularly discussed and reviewed together with pupils and families.

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners:

- If the needs and barriers are individual to the pupil this may include provision of mentoring, careers advice, college placements, 1-2-1 tuition or out of hours learning, or where appropriate an education, health and care plan or alternative provision.
- Where the needs are wider and a whole family response is more appropriate, this is likely to include a voluntary early help assessment.
- Where engagement in support is proving challenging, schools should hold more formal conversations with the parents (and pupil where they are old enough to understand). This is likely to be led by the senior leader responsible for attendance and may include the school's point of contact in the local authority School Attendance Support Team. These meetings should clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the pupil and family and the potential need for legal intervention in future but should also be an opportunity to continue to listen to and understand the barriers to attendance and explain the help that is available to avoid those consequences.

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with all schools should work with the local authority to:

- Put formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or an education supervision order.
- Issue a fixed penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or
- engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour.
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding
- concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).
- Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

In all cases, the school should monitor the impact of any intervention(s) and make adjustments where necessary in discussion with the pupil, parents and any other partners involved as part of any whole family plan or team around the family. Where interventions are failing, all parties should work together to identify the reasons why and either adjust or change the approach.

**Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities**
Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil.

That said, in working with their parents to improve attendance, schools should be mindful of the barriers these pupils face and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. This should include:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed. Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Working with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including where applicable ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed. In addition, schools should work with families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Please see further details on SEN support.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.

- Ensure data is regularly monitored for these groups including at board and governing body meetings and in Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority so that additional support from other partners is accessed where necessary.

Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education. Please see further information on supporting pupils with medical conditions at school.

In all cases, schools should be sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents and they should talk to pupils and parents and understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance to develop individual approaches that meet an individual pupil's specific needs.

### Part-time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long- term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full- time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part- time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

**Appendix C** contains clear guidance which outlines the support that must be in place at each stage of the use of a part-time timetable.

### Collaborative Working

All schools should work with the local communities (including voluntary and community groups) to help remove the barriers to attendance that families experience. In some cases, families will experience the same or similar barriers to attendance for multiple children who attend different schools in the area. As such, it is of mutual benefit for such schools to work together where possible. This will be particularly beneficial in supporting transition between feeder schools.

Schools of all types, local authorities and other local partners should work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the pupil (e.g. health services where there are medical conditions or the police where there are extra-familial harms). Local authorities

and schools (of all types) are expected to have a regular Targeting Support Meetings at least termly.

Further, to facilitate timely collaborative working across partners, all schools are also legally required to share information from their registers with the local authority. As a minimum this includes:

- Every time a pupil's name is to be added to, or deleted from, the school admission register outside of standard transition times (including the statutory reason for deletion). For deletions this must take place before the deletion, and for additions it must be no later than 5 working days after the addition.
- The name and address of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has missed school for 10 days or more without the absence being recorded as authorised. Local authorities should agree the frequency this must be shared with all schools in their area. This should be no less frequently than once per calendar month. Expectations of local authorities:

Please click here to take you to the East Riding of Yorkshire website for further details on school attendance.

**Code of conduct for issuing fixed penalty notices**

Every local authority must draw up and is expected to publish on their website a Code of Conduct for issuing fixed penalty notices which must be adhered to by all schools, the police and any local authority officer issuing a penalty notice. In producing or amending the Code of Conduct the local authority consult with schools and the police.

To further underpin the principle of support first and improve the consistency of approach for pupils and parents across the country, subject to Parliament, the Secretary of State intends to introduce a national framework to replace individual codes of conduct ahead of the 2023-24 academic year. Until then, each local authority's Code must continue to set out the situations where a fixed penalty notice is appropriate. These should include: a number of unauthorised absences, one off instances of irregular attendance (such as holidays taken during term time without the school's permission) and where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason. The code must also specify the maximum number of penalty notices that may be issued to an individual parent in any 12-month period.

**Payment of penalties**

The penalty is £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The payment must be paid direct to the local authority regardless of who issued the penalty notice.

If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28-day period, the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice. Parent(s) can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired, and full payment has not been made.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

Monies collected through fixed penalty notices can only be used for the administration of the fixed penalty notice system or for prosecuting for the original offence in cases of non-payment. Any surplus at the end of the year must be returned to the Secretary of State.

**Pupil Information**
Schools will record personal details of every pupil at the school in the admission register. The register includes the following information for every pupil:

- full name;
- sex;
- the full name and address of each of the pupil's parents;
- which of the pupil's parents the pupil normally lives with and at least one telephone number by which each parent who the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency. DfE's advice is that where reasonably practicable, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person for each pupil;
- 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.

**Pupils with a new address and/or school**
Where a parent of a pupil informs the school that the pupil will live at another address, whether in addition to or instead of the address at which the pupil currently lives, the school will ensure that the admission register contains:

- the full name of the parent the pupil will normally live with;
- the address; and
- the date when the pupil will start normally living there.

Where a parent of a pupil informs the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, the school must ensure that the admission register contains:

- the name of the other school;
- the date when the pupil began or will begin attending that school.

**Maintaining the Admission Register**
The admission register is to be kept up to date. Schools will encourage parents/carers to inform them of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

**Deletion of names from Admission Register**
A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended. A pupil's name must not be removed for any other reason and doing so would constitute off-rolling. Schools must follow the requirements set out in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and Working Together to Improve Attendance (2024)."

**Contents of the attendance register**
All schools must keep an attendance register in accordance with regulation 6 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

Schools must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity as defined in regulation 6(4); or
- Unable to attend school due to exceptional circumstances as defined in regulation 6(5).

Schools must record whether the absence of a pupil of compulsory school age is authorised or not. There is no requirement for schools to record whether the absence of pupils not of compulsory school age is authorised or not, but where possible schools should use the national attendance and absence codes to help them monitor their attendance and to form good attendance habits.

Schools must record the nature of the activity where a pupil of compulsory school age is attending an approved educational activity.
Schools must also record the nature of the circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Schools cannot delete a pupil's name from the attendance register unless they have a reason (as set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended) to delete the pupil's name from the admission register; the pupil's name must be deleted from both registers at the same time.

### Attendance and Absence Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education. These can be found on page 76 of the DFE document Working Together to Improve School Attendance: Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK

**Other relevant legislation and guidance Relevant legislation**
The Education Act 1996 The Children Act 1989
The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 The Sentencing Act 2020 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

**Relevant government guidance**

Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour Children missing education
Keeping children safe in education Working together to safeguard children Elective home education Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities
Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs
Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying

## Appendix A: Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School Name: | | | | | |
| Pupil/student Details | | | | | |
| Name: | | Date of birth: | | Class/Form: | |
| Address: | | | | | |
| Contact Numbers: | | | | | |
| Sibling Details of Compulsory School Age (or other children living in the household) | | | | | |
| Name: | | Date of birth: | | School: | |
| Name: | | Date of birth: | | School: | |
| I request permission for my child to be absent from school between: - | | | | | |
| Date of First Day School Absence: | | Date of Return to School: | | Total of Absent School Days: | |
| Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from school in term time and include any supporting information. The Headteacher will not be able to consider your request without your supporting documents.<br>Please read carefully the Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents attached. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Parent's Declaration[4]:<br>I have read the Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents and understand I/we may receive a penalty notice if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request. Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five-day absence equals 10 sessions. | | | | | |
| Signed:<br>(Parent/Carer)<br>Full Name: | | | Date: | | |

[4] Parent: In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—
who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or (b) who has care of him. (Education Act 1996 sec.576)

**Please note:** We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.

**Any disagreement between estranged parents should be resolved prior to submitting this request to your child's school.**

**For School Use Only**

| The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child's absences will be recorded as follows: - | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of Authorised Sessions: | | Number of Unauthorised Sessions: | | Number of Unauthorised sessions to date: | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Signed:<br>Position: | Date: |

- **Original signed and completed forms to be retained with pupil's records.**
- **Copy should be returned to the parent/carer of the pupil to confirm authorised or unauthorised absence prior to the intended absence period.**

## Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances - Information for Parents

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. There is, however, a discretionary power held by Headteachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. Please note this is **not an entitlement**. The Headteacher will only authorise absence in line with the East Riding Behaviour & Attendance Partnership 'Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances' Framework. Headteachers will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education. **Please note that supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.**

There is no longer a provision in law for Headteachers to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday.

If your request is authorised, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and school are not obliged to provide work for your child to complete. Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

**Penalty Notices**
Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised

absence is any absence that the Headteacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent. If your child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absence you may be liable for a penalty notice (one day's absence equals two sessions and a five-day absence is equal to 10 sessions etc.).

Penalty Notices will be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing. They will be issued by post direct to the home of a parent after possibly just one warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, warnings may not be given. This includes pupils caught on truancy sweeps, persistent late arrival after the close of registration **or unauthorised absence that has not been authorised as an absence from school for exceptional circumstances.** In these cases, the warning is given on the absence request form and detailed within this information leaflet and no written warning will be given.

Where parents do not follow school procedures of submitting a request and simply remove their child without seeking prior approval, a warning may not be given. Parents must complete a request for exceptional leave form and submit this to the school, allowing for sufficient time to enable the school to consider the request and inform the parent of the decision.

Fines are issued for unauthorised absence of 5 or more days and each school day is divided into 2 registration periods. **For example, if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five-day absence is equal to 10 sessions.**

If your request is declined and you still take your child out of school each parent within your household may be issued with a £80 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 21 days it will increase to £160. If after 28 days it remains unpaid you may be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if you have any questions about this, or if you need help to achieve an improvement, please contact your child's school to discuss this.

**We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.**