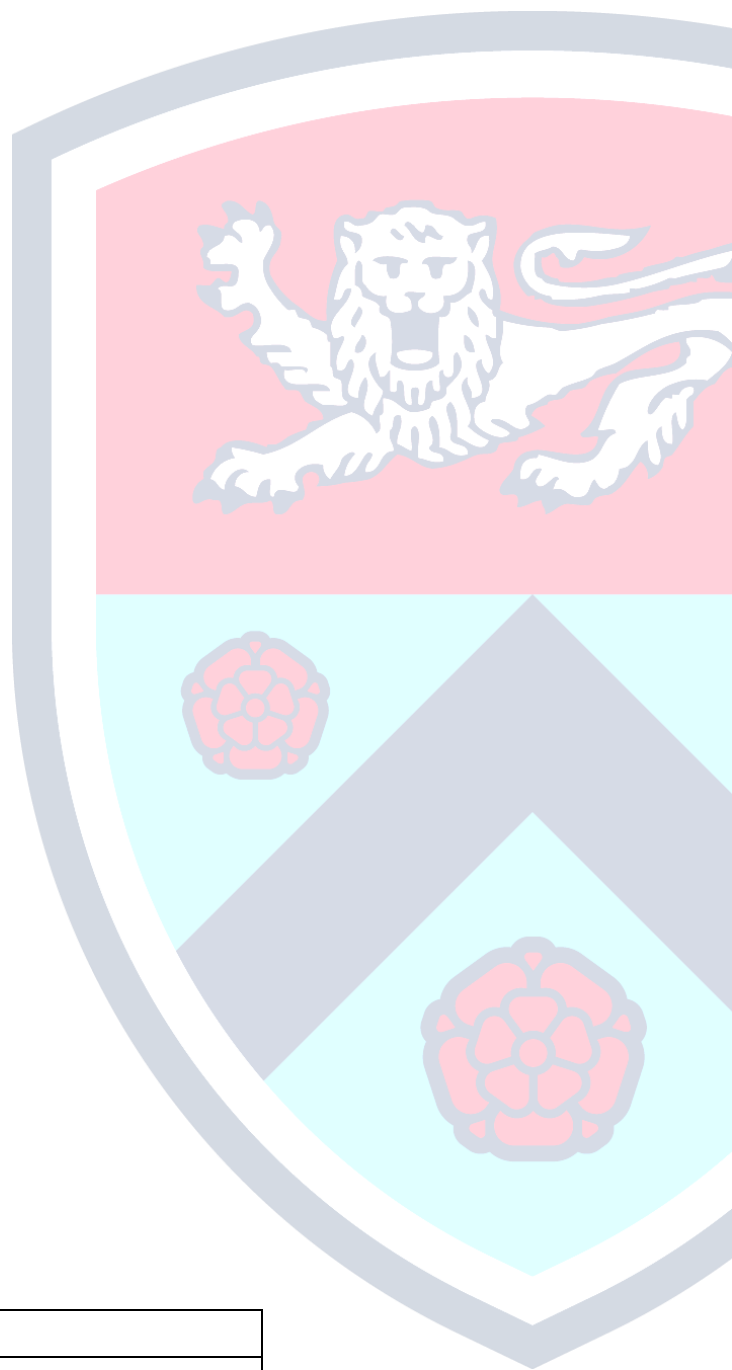




Attendance Policy



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Governors' Committee	Welfare
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Confidence Purpose Respect

This report should be read in conjunction with other policies and guidance:

- [DfE- School Attendance](#)
- [DfE- Working Together to Improve School Attendance – July 2026](#)
- [DfE- Children Missing Education – September 2025](#)
- [Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions – December 2015](#)
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Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance,' through our whole school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Being a solution-focused school that attempts to overcome barriers and improve attendance;
- Creating a clear link between attendance, attainment and future potential earnings that is regularly communicated to pupils and parents;
- Letters, postcards, emails, text messages, form time materials, weekly newsletter to parents will embed the importance of good attendance and celebrate successes regularly;
- Parents and pupils can clearly track daily attendance and attendance over time on ClassCharts;
- School assemblies and form time PowerPoints include a focus on attendance for all pupils and for key pupil groups;
- Rewards for forms and individuals for good attendance include letters home, ClassCharts points, attendance reward events, emails and phone calls;
- Rewards for pupils with improved attendance including letters home, ClassCharts points, attendance reward events, emails and phone calls;
- The Attendance Manager meets with Year Leaders on a weekly basis to discuss attendance issues and plan intervention;
- The leaders from Attendance, Behaviour, Safeguarding, SEND, & Pastoral meet weekly to discuss pupils of concern and plan appropriate multi-team interventions.

The Promotion and Support of Punctuality in Attending Lessons

Carnforth High School recognises the clear link between attendance, punctuality and attainment of our pupils. This policy aims to encourage the highest level of attendance for individual pupils, groups of pupils with certain characteristics (for example, vulnerable pupils), and whole school attendance.

Carnforth High School recognises that promoting excellent attendance and punctuality prepares pupils for successful future lives.

This policy covers the strategies used to improve attendance and punctuality and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of key staff and all stakeholders.

The guiding principles of the policy are listed below:

- To improve the whole school attendance percentage this academic year. School sets an overall target of 96% for all pupils;
- To raise the profile of attendance and make it a priority for staff, pupils, parents/carers and the Governing Body;
- To ensure the provision of appropriate and timely guidance and support for parents/carers, pupils and staff;
- To develop and monitor clear procedures for maintaining accurate registers;
- Providing a framework for which staff can operate within to provide a consistent approach to raising levels of attendance, by using and working with relevant agencies as appropriate;
- To provide a safe, caring and compassionate environment where every pupil can access all opportunities offered to them;
- To work with pupils and their families to ensure good attendance and punctuality to school;
- To have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and make reasonable adjustments for pupils when required.

Principles

So that pupils can achieve as well as they possibly can, they need to attend school regularly. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole School community. Promoting good attendance will also help pupils to meet the expectations that they will face in the workplace.

The school will promote good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance by pupils will be recognised appropriately. All pupils should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

The attendance policy includes procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. Schools have a duty in law to refer any concerns about persistent poor attendance to the local authority for further action, this could be early help, children's social care, legal intervention, etc.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent from school this must be classified by the school, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorise the absence, not parent/carers. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required using the methods available.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE from school means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES are those which the school does not consider reasonable, is not satisfied with the reasons given for absence or has been sent a letter explaining that further absences will not be authorised. This includes:

- parent/carers keeping pupils off school unnecessarily.
- truancy for all or part of the school day.
- absences where the school has not yet received an acceptable explanation.
- any other circumstance where the Headteacher has not given authorisation.

Pupils are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parent/carer and the pupil. If a pupil is reluctant to attend, parents/carers should never cover up their absence or to give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer.

The school is always willing to support parents/carers whose children are experiencing difficulties that may result in non-attendance. Parents/carers should contact the school at an early stage so that we can work together to resolve any problems. Working in partnership nearly always brings success.

When all measures to improve the pupil's attendance have failed, the Local Authority can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents/ carers or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the pupil. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Procedures

- Parents/carers will be informed annually via the school website about the school's Attendance Policy.
- Staff monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality via the school's behaviour systems and record appropriate information via ClassCharts.
- Pupils who achieve good attendance will be recognised in many ways including congratulations in praise assemblies, letters home recognising good attendance, individual tutor group rewards and an end of year celebration trip.
- If a pupil is absent from school, parents/carers should contact the school by telephone before **8.30am**, or via email attendance@carforthhigh.co.uk.
- If no notification has been received by 09.25am, the school will make first day contact. **If no reply is received the school staff will make contact and possibly visit the child's home.**
- Pupils who arrive late for school must sign in at reception. They should then be marked present by the class teacher/tutor on arrival to classroom.
 - Morning session – 08.55am (**Pupils are expected to be in school by 8.50am**)
 - Afternoon session – 1.25pm

NB: If pupils arrive after **9.25am** during the morning session these will be marked as **unauthorised**.

- Where there are concerns that non-attendance is adversely affecting pupil progress, staff will consult the parents/carers in the first instance.
- Attendance will be monitored regularly by senior leadership and communication will be made when there are concerns about poor attendance. Home visits will be made where appropriate.
- The senior leader responsible for attendance may convene a meeting between parents/carers, appropriate school staff, and any relevant external agencies. This meeting may also consider issues of punctuality and behaviour.
- If a pupil has 10 unauthorised sessions during a 10-week period, a referral to the Local Authority will be made by the school for a potential penalty notice.
- If pupils are persistently late (10 U codes) over a 10-week period, this can result in a parent/ carer receiving a fixed penalty notice.
- The Local Authority will review the current situation; offer support and consider further action, which could be to recognise that attendance has improved or to follow more formal procedures where attendance has

not improved. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent/carers receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

- The school has a procedure in place for roll call in the events of an evacuation.

Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and **severe absence** is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- Send regular communication to families regarding attendance;
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school. Ensure that we have listened and understand barriers to attendance.
 - Explain the help that is available.
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence.
 - Review any existing actions or interventions.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant;
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence;
- Implement sanctions, where necessary.

Sanctions

Carnforth High School will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by case basis.

Penalty Notices

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), and other external agencies can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

The school will notify the local authority to issue a penalty notice.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks).
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil.
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution.
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within **3 years** of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to Improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support. Notices to improve are issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for Lancashire County Council.

They include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

Punctuality

At Carnforth High School we promote high standards of punctuality. Pupils frequently arriving late to lessons will miss valuable learning opportunities. Arriving late will generate a sanction through the school behaviour policy. Any pupils arriving to lesson 3 minutes or more after the bell will receive a 'late' mark via ClassCharts with the number of minutes late recorded. Pupils that are persistently late to lessons during the week, will receive consequences (in-line with the school's behaviour policy);

Absence During a School Term (Holidays)

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (appendix 1), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence, which is granted by the Headteacher who will determine the length of time a pupil can be away from school. It is unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

If we suspect a holiday has been taken during term time without a request for leave being submitted, a home visit will be completed. This could result in a fine being issued.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

We encourage parents to notify the school at the earliest possible convenience of medical appointment. This may be via a letter or communication system. However, parents/ carers may also send in a copy of the appointment letter to be kept on file.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

Unplanned/Planned Absence

Unplanned Absence

Parents and Carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school (01524 732424), or emailing the school's attendance email

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is persistent, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, or the school has issued the 3rd letter of the attendance protocol, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Off-Site Educational Activities

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

People responsible for attendance matters in this School are:

Senior Leader for Attendance: Mr E McGauran – emcgauran@carnforthhigh.co.uk

Attendance Officer: Mr D. Milner – attendance@carnforthhigh.co.uk

Teaching Staff/Tutors

- Mark registers accurately and within the first 3 minutes of the lesson/ tutor period.
- Report any missing pupils to Climate Walk.
- Use the 'L' code to record any late marks via ClassCharts.
- Challenge pupils re: poor attendance/punctuality.
- Monitor attendance patterns and make Year Leader/Attendance aware where there are causes for concern.
- Celebrate excellent attendance.

Attendance Manager/Officer

- Oversee the tracking of pupils with poor or irregular attendance.
- Ensure there is rigour in following up pupil absence.
- Arrange meetings with parents/carers of poor attenders. Arrange home visits where appropriate, these H/Vs are not just a routine exercise but enforcement of support and next steps.
- Monitor the attendance of the year groups and liaise with the AHT for attendance.
- Issue praise letters and incentives for good attendance.
- Attend regular PASS meetings.
- Monitor completion of registers.
- Make first day contact with parents/carers to establish reasons for absence and alert parents/carers to cases of absence without their knowledge.
- Record all notifications of reasons for absence.
- Record weekly statistic for AHT for attendance.
- Make contact with parents/ carers where there are causes for concern.
- Record contact made in relation to these cases.
- Provide welfare support to pupils struggling with poor attendance.
- Conduct attendance clinics/home visits as required.
- Speak with pupils on a one-to-one/group basis regarding attendance.
- Confirm in writing future requirements regarding attendance and medical notes.
- Provide feedback – i.e. results of initial investigation and an expectation of future Educational Welfare Officer input.
- Make referrals to external agencies (where appropriate CME etc).
- Complete appropriate paperwork that might be leading to the issue of a fixed penalty notices or initiate court proceedings.

Senior Leader (Attendance)

- Review and update whole-school attendance policy.
- Meet regularly with Attendance Manager and others involved in attendance management.
- Attend multi-agency attendance meetings (Panel meetings) ensuring that written outcomes are published.
- Monitor patterns of attendance by specific user-groups.
- Report on attendance patterns regularly to the SLT and Governing Body every half term. Provide information for the Families First Local Support Team when requested.
- Liaise with Educational Welfare Officer.

Governors

- Review whole-school attendance policy.
- Set annual attendance targets.
- Review attendance patterns.
- Attend attendance panel meetings as requested.

Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers are ultimately responsible for their child attending Carnforth High School regularly. (Education Act 1996).
- To ensure their child attends Carnforth High School in full uniform and equipped to learn.
- To avoid keeping their child away from Carnforth High School for any reason other than illness or other authorised explanation.
- Not to arrange holidays during term time.
- To immediately contact Carnforth High School by phone (01524 732424) on the first day of any absence giving clear reasons.
- To contact Carnforth High School each subsequent day of absence to confirm their child's non-attendance and reasons.
- To provide a letter with the child on their return to school and provide, where appropriate, medical evidence of illness.
- Attend meetings at Carnforth High School as requested.
- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before **8.30am** on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the attendance or pastoral team, who can be contacted via the front office (01524 732424).

Using Attendance Data

- A pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.
- The attendance lead will provide relevant teachers with regular attendance for each pupil within their tutor group/class.

Pupils will be grouped into categories based on their percentage attendance as follows:

Stage	Attendance %	Actions
0	100 - 96	Excellent Attendance: Recognition and Rewards
1a	95.99 - 93	Form Tutor Monitoring and Support
1b	92.99 - 90	Year Team Monitoring and Support
2	89.99 - 85	Attendance Team Monitoring and Support (Parent Partnership Plan)
3	84.99 - 0	Senior Leader Monitoring and Support (Attendance Contract / LA Referral)
4	84.99 - 0	Local Authority Action: Prosecution / Educational Neglect Order

Attendance during the school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which approximates to this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
100%	0	0	0
97%	5 days	1 week	25 lessons
95%	10 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	39 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Home Visits

Home visits are a strategy used by the school to address pupil absences, build relationships with families and to identify potential barriers to attendance.

The school may perform non-scheduled home visits. Staff will be courteous and professional on visits.

Education for Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School

In some circumstances children are unable to attend school due to various health needs. Therefore, the school may need to submit an 'alternative medical provision' application to the local authority when a child does not attend school for 15 or more consecutive days. The parent/ carer of the child will be required to provide appropriate medical evidence stating that the child is 'unfit to attend school' (see guidance below):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/941900/health_needs_guidance_accessible.pdf

Local authorities must:

Arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

Local authorities should:

Provide such education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child.

Further Information

This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies on: safeguarding, behaviour and SEN. Please also follow this link for further advice: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the [DfE's guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed

Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered

Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study

		for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made

Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly	Every pupil absent as the school is closed

	closed	unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes

Absent – unauthorised absence

G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

Administrative codes

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays