



# Attendance Policy

School Policies agreed by Governing Body | 2017, 18, 2020, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26

Review Autumn 27



What you need to do	<p>Pupils- be on time every day at school</p> <p>Parents and carers:- Ensure your children are ready to learn, in the gates by 8:45am every day. If they are unable to come to school, inform us by 9am every day.</p> <p>If you need to take your child out of school, fill in the relevant forms and let us know well in advance so we can let you know if this is possible.</p> <p>If you need help, talk to us.</p>
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What we will do:

98-100%	Excellent attender	Good attendance benefits to learning and friendships. Accessing all opportunities	Bronze, silver and gold awards termly. The chance to go into the vending machine draw for a book half termly, best class rewarded weekly with extra play.
95-97.9%	Good attender	Very few learning opportunities are missed.	Helping towards class rewards, certificates termly.
90.1-94.9%	At risk attender	Risk of underachievement, up to 19 school days missed in an academic year.	Letters home, meetings with staff- teacher, attendance officer, Safeguarding lead, possible interventions. Support to remove barriers, possible parent contract, and/or Early/Family help.
50.1%-90%	Persistent absentee	Extreme risk of underachievement. More than 22 school days missed in an academic year.	Parent contract, possible prosecution, fines and criminal record. School will try to support and remove barriers as much as possible. Meetings with Local Authority staff, welfare officer, attendance officer, safeguarding staff.
50% and below	Severe Absentee	Lack of achievement opportunities at all levels.	Safeguarding- DSL assess and referral to Sandwell children's Trust for Educational Neglect

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# 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

# 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the 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
- Maintained schools: Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Equality Act 2010

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Attendance will be discussed at Governing Body meetings, including the Finance and Wellbeing and Full Governors, with a link Governor overseeing this with attendance staff.

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Deputy Headteacher and Attendance Officer to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance - Headteacher

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs R Gillett and can be contacted via the school office on 0121 357 3326.

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/ (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- The attendance officer is Mrs N Tierney and can be contacted via the school attendance mobile phone on 07749889874 or email to [admin@ferndale.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ferndale.sandwell.sch.uk).

### 3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office at the beginning of school in the morning and afternoon.

Teachers to communicate with parents in the first instance when a pattern or a concern is highlighted. Teachers will inform parents in terms of number of days absences and not percentages and how this is impacting the child's attainment.

### 3.6 School admin/office staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the appropriate staff member where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Provide any additional pastoral support where possible and as required

### 3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call or whatsapp on the dedicated attendance line of 07749889874 or input the attendance on the school app, or email [admin@ferndale.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ferndale.sandwell.sch.uk) to report their child's absence before 9am 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
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting:

Mrs Natalie Tierney, Attendance Officer for day to day absence, pastoral support and queries via whatsapp or email, Alternatively, Parent Support Adviser, Mrs Claire Hall (nee Miss Allsop) is available at the above email and phone number 01213573326. Office staff are also able to help, as are classteachers or the associated Senior Leader for the child's building.

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:50am in the classroom and ends at 3:20pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day and be in the classroom by 8:50am, gates open at 8:30am and doors open at 8:40am.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am. Registration for all children in the afternoon is at different times, for different year groups, due to varying lunch times and swimming, although the register is taken as soon as this session starts. School finishes at 3:20pm.

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by inputting the attendance on the school app, or by calling or whatsapp the dedicated attendance line: 07749889874 or email [admin@ferndale.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ferndale.sandwell.sch.uk).

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 there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, 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.

### 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, if this is a routine appointment eg dental checkup, opticians etc this may not be authorised, unless official proof can be seen that this appointment cannot be in school holidays or after school hours. Parents/Carers should ensure that any Request/Application is made in advance 6 weeks of any Leave of Absence to be taken. This form is available from the office or Mrs Tierney.

Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- School tracks punctuality and rewards those on time with class awards, as well as supporting parents through contact for any persistent lateness. Noting that:
  - The 'U' mark counts the same as an 'O' mark and is UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE on your child's Registration/Attendance Record for that half day session.
  - Pupils arriving at school after 08:45am will need to enter via the main gates by the school office and be signed in by the adult bringing them to school on the system.
  - If your child arrives LATE more than 5 times in any school year the 'privilege' of school marking this as an L can be 'withdrawn' and if your child is not IN THE CLASSROOM before 08:50am in the morning this will be marked as 'U' Unauthorised Late.
  - Unauthorised Lateness 'U' and/or Unauthorised Absence 'O' can lead to parents/carers being referred to the Education Welfare Service and parents/carers being liable to Fixed Penalty Notices and/or Magistrates Court proceedings against them. See section 5.

### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may need to undertake a home visit, or may need to make contact with other agencies (i.e. Social Care, the Police, etc.,) to meet our safeguarding children responsibilities. This also links to Sandwell's CME/CfME policy.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent

- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels:

Termly attendance percentage shared- the ARBOR app allows this in real time, in addition to written reports via the app.

Daily calls and follow-ups if no reason has been given or if school needs to further explore reasons.

Letters to share concerns eg if below 95%, or to decline leave of absence requests.

Written meeting invitations and meetings virtually or in person to discuss how school can support increased attendance and remove barriers to attendance. This might include an early/family help or whole family plan, where absence is a symptom of wider issues. Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners will 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.

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, attendance will be enforced through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

## 5. Authorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as

- Death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- Life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil

- Parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)  
Leave of absence already granted by a previous school or local authority (granted within the last six months and supported by documentation from the previous school)

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 6 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office or Mrs Tierney. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

## 5.2 Other reasons for authorised absence

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent’s religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- We acknowledge and welcome the multi-faith nature of our school community and recognise that some families’ important religious festivals may fall within term time. Government guidance says a pupil can be absent “on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs”. However, attending school regularly and on time is also an important legal responsibility for parents/carers. Therefore, there are occasions where the Head Teacher may request a conversation with parents/carers about time requested for religious observance if there are wider concerns about a child’s attendance.
- At the Head Teacher’s discretion, a limited amount of time may be authorised for religious observance. This would usually be no more than one day per academic year for religious observance. In order to authorise this absence, the Head Teacher may request additional written confirmation from the place of worship to which a family belongs.
- In addition to religious observance, we recognise the importance of cultural identity for our pupils and understands the conflicting pressures for families living in the UK from abroad. Nevertheless, whilst sympathetic to the need of families to remain in contact with relatives and their ‘heritage’ overseas, the
- Head Teacher will seldom authorise exceptional leave of absence for extended visits abroad because of the consequences for pupils’ attendance and learning.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

## 5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)

- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our pupils to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, pupils need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise pupils for poor attendance.

All children are rewarded each term who have achieved 100% attendance for that term.

If you have 100% attendance in 1 term you will become a bronze attender.

If you gain 100% attendance over 2 terms you become a silver attender.

If you achieve 100% attendance over 3 terms (a whole school year) you become a gold attender.

If you have 98% attendance or more, you will also receive a certificate for that term/year. These aren't as 'big' as the 100% but recognise that sometimes you just can't help being poorly!

Class attendance is shared weekly in assemblies with the winning class gaining extra play that week.

Punctuality is also rewarded on a class level in the same way.

Some children may be selected to participate in specific reward programmes, such as 'most improved attender' or 'most improved punctuality' these also result in a reward for the winner, such as coming in their own clothes or bringing in a toy for the day.

The best class per phase per half term also wins the attendance league table, meaning that they get to choose their own prize eg a mini disco, colouring, film or toy session.

There are also non regular events eg 'love reading week' that we use to promote attendance and win a book, or 'Love school' week in around St Valentine's day, or punctuality spotlight weeks and prizes.

Every Monday and Friday, a random number is chosen and if that child is in school on time, they win dojos.

## 7. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

### 7.1 Attendance contract

If your school and/or local authority offers parents an attendance contract, add:

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

## 7.2 Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans and attendance contracts have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but not criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

## 7.3 Notice 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.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

It will 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, or prosecution considered, 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

## 7.4 Penalty notices

The headteacher (or a deputy or assistant headteacher, authorised by the headteacher), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority a copy of any penalty notice issued.

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

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.

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). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

## 8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

### 8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

School will work with families and strategies for removing in-school barriers, including mentoring, family and parent support, buddy work, incentives eg 'a job to help the teacher at the start of the day' and unpicking the reasons as much as possible. School is keen to develop relationships with families to help school be seen as a safe learning environment.

### 8.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

Where a pupil has any mental or physical health needs, and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority as required.

If a child needs to be hospitalised for 5 days or more, the Hospital Teaching Service can be contacted, so that, if it is medically appropriate/approved and possible they can work with your child whilst they are not in school. This would be recorded as being educated off site and would be equivalent to an attendance at school.

If a child leaves hospital and a return to school is not medically appropriate/approved then the appropriate Unit can be contacted to provide teaching support at home. This would be recorded as being educated off site and would be equivalent to an attendance at school.

Support for pupils not able to attend school may include virtual links to events eg assemblies.

### 8.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan, SEND, or other vulnerabilities, and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority as appropriate, and consider what support can be provided. This could be through the family spoke, trusted adult support or other short term solutions.

Support for pupils not able to attend school may include virtual links to events eg assemblies.

School will work with families and strategies for removing in-school barriers, including mentoring, family and parent support, buddy work, incentives eg 'a job to help the teacher at the start of the day' and unpicking the reasons as much as possible. School is keen to develop relationships with families to help school be seen as a safe learning environment.

#### **8.4 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence**

Pupils will be supported in school due to the family and pastoral nature of school. This may be short visits, a transition plan to build up stamina or a buddy/mentoring to ease any mental health support required. Risk assessments may be undertaken to establish safety concerns.

#### **8.5 Prolonged absence for children, including in the EYFS**

In cases of prolonged absence, or when a child is absent without notification, we will attempt to contact the child's parents and alternative emergency contacts.

When deciding whether a child's absence should be considered prolonged, we will consider the:

- Patterns and trends in the child's absences and their personal circumstances
- Vulnerability of the child and their parents, as well as the circumstances of their home life

We will also implement our safeguarding procedures (see our child protection/safeguarding policy on the website and refer any concerns to local children's social care and/or request a police welfare check.

## **9. Attendance monitoring**

### **9.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

### **9.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

### 9.4 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
- 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
  - Listen, 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 re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above)
- The school uses a range of communication to support attendance, including letters and app posts./messages.

Specific tracking:

- ALL children plus vulnerable groups (eg SEN, Looked after, EHCP, Pupil Premium(- half termly alongside local (LA) and regional & National data eg using Dfe, Arbor, Insights.
- Persistent Absentees (PA)- those below 90%
- Concerns list- those children classed as PA who are deemed to be of concern eg no reasonable explanation eg chicken pox, are tracked weekly

- Half termly (unless a short 4 week half term)
- - all children, including PA vulnerable groupings are tracked, including those who are new to the PA list
- Amber concerns- these are children with an attendance between 90-94.9%
- These children are tracked half termly tracked but may also receive additional input including letters, meetings.
- Lates
- Tracked half termly and if unauthorised late (U code) then this incurs additional intervention.

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Attendance Champion, Attendance Officer, Senior leaders and Governors. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Pupil mental health and wellbeing
- EYFS policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	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 closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
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