Diocese of Ely
multi-academy trust

Attendance Policy

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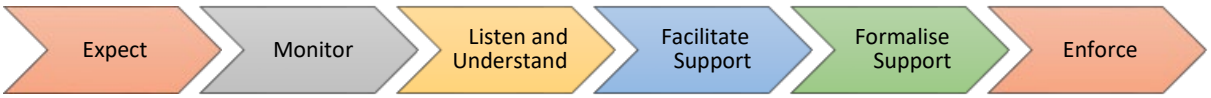
1. Our Belief and Vision

At DEMAT, we believe that good attendance is a significant lever in securing the very best outcomes for children and we hold the firm conviction that **improving attendance is everyone's responsibility**. We understand that children cannot benefit from high-quality teaching if they are not present in school. Furthermore, we recognise that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance due to SEND, mental health needs, long-term medical conditions, social care involvement, or family instability. We are steadfastly committed to identifying and removing these barriers through early and meaningful support.

Our vision is to create an environment where pupils want to attend school because they feel safe, valued, and known. Within all our schools, attendance expectations are consistently high, and we ensure that any barriers to attendance are identified early and addressed through supportive partnerships with families. We prioritize our disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils to ensure equity of opportunity, ensuring that all attendance improvement efforts remain strategic, evidence-informed, and data-driven.

2. Working Together to Improve Attendance

At DEMAT, improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education can be wide and complex, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with our schools being places pupils want to be: calm, orderly, safe and supportive, with a rich curriculum and strong relationships.



We listen, empathise and support. Where support and partnership working do not lead to improvement, we will, where appropriate, challenge and use legal interventions to formalise or enforce attendance, in line with national guidance.

3. Attendance Expectations

We believe that achieving good attendance is one of the most important aspects of securing the best outcomes for our pupils and is, therefore, worth a significant investment of resources. Our vision is that our school culture will result in our pupils wanting to attend school and that we will work together with pupils and families to pre-empt and remove any barriers that could lead to poor school attendance.

Our approach to achieving good attendance involves:

- **Cultivating Excellence:** Passionately championing a vibrant school culture where pupils and families deeply value the educational journey and feel a profound sense of belonging and individual worth.
- **Advocating for Growth:** Articulating the transformative power of consistent attendance, highlighting how daily engagement unlocks both immediate academic success and long-term life opportunities.

- **Strategic Oversight:** Driving measurable improvements in attendance through the design and rigorous execution of streamlined, data-informed systems.
- **Responsive Support:** Prioritizing pupil success by spearheading rapid, compassionate early interventions that dismantle barriers to learning.
- **Collaborative Synergy:** Cultivating high-impact partnerships with local stakeholders to create a unified support network for every child.

By combining a robust curriculum with proactive behavioral support and specialized care for our most vulnerable learners, we are driving a culture of excellence and attendance. Through strategic internal resource management and valued local partnerships, we are committed to achieving sustained, year-on-year growth in pupil engagement.

The guiding principles of this approach are:

- **Inclusive Engagement:** Serve all pupils and families with unwavering respect, professional integrity, and a deep commitment to equality and diversity.
- **Safeguarding First:** Integrate robust safeguarding into every assessment and intervention to secure the best possible outcomes for every young person.
- **Empowering Learners:** Partner with families to assess needs and eliminate barriers, ensuring no pupil becomes disenfranchised from their education.
- **Collaborative Protection:** Unite with statutory and voluntary agencies to keep the welfare and protection of young people our paramount priority.
- **Targeted Support:** We are relentlessly bothered about the success and wellbeing of every pupil. This means we do not accept absence as an inevitability; instead, we use our deep knowledge of the curriculum and our precise understanding of each pupil's areas for development to drive our actions. Delivering responsive interventions to boost attainment and attendance.
- **Tailored Education:** Guarantee every pupil accesses learning perfectly suited to their age, ability, aptitude, and SEN requirements.
- **Rapid Response:** Commit to immediate action with same-day outreach for all initial absences.

3.1 Foundational Pillars of the DEMAT Attendance Strategy:

- **Belonging:** School Culture
- **Assurance:** Attendance tracking and reporting
- **Advocacy:** Early intervention and tiered response
- **Unified response:** A unified operational framework that bridges the gap between data (Assurance) and action (Advocacy) through whole Trust alignment and real-time communication.

Belonging – Culture and Expectations

We are unwavering in our commitment to achieving outstanding attendance across the Trust! Recognizing that every school day is a vital opportunity for growth, we ensure that attendance remains at the heart of our leadership strategy.

Assurance: Strategic Leadership & Accountability

To maintain our high standards, our Headteachers are directly involved in the attendance management process, receiving and reviewing detailed data updates every single day. This culture of high expectations is spearheaded by a dedicated member of each Senior Leadership Team, who serves as the Attendance Lead with a clear mandate to meet and exceed our ambitious targets. Supporting this vision is our specialist Attendance Officers, who provides expert guidance and hands-on support to ensure all colleagues can fulfill their roles effectively.

Advocacy: Proactive Support & Intervention

Our leaders, any pastoral teams, and attendance colleagues go to extraordinary lengths to ensure pupils attend regularly. We believe in a "support first" approach, which includes:

- Providing dedicated assistance to pupils and families facing difficulties.
- Conducting home visits to maintain vital connections with our community.
- Working in close partnership with the Local Authority and external support services.
- Challenging absenteeism where appropriate and, in extreme circumstances, gathering evidence to pursue legal proceedings to protect a child's right to an education.

A Unified Responsibility

Attendance is a headline feature of every single SLT meeting and is formally reported to our Trustees on a termly basis. It is vital that every member of our staff understands how they benefit from this rigorous work and how they can actively support it within their own roles. When we work together to ensure pupils are present, we create the best possible environment for every child to thrive.

3.2 High-Quality Educational Experience

A high-quality educational experience is a key motivator for attendance. Our schools signal the importance of education by valuing learning time, which includes teaching to the final lesson of every term and minimizing any time spent out of the classroom. We utilize inclusive pedagogy and high-participation teaching techniques, such as "Cold Call" and "Mini Whiteboards" to ensure 100% of pupils feel involved and experience the motivation of academic success. By prioritizing literacy and providing broken-down, step-by-step direct instruction, we remove barriers so that all pupils feel capable of succeeding. This is further supported by a holistic enrichment program that encourages participation in clubs, sports, and the arts to strengthen the pupil's bond with the school community.

3.3 The "Why" of Attendance and Balanced Recognition

We regularly communicate to parents and pupils the direct link between attendance and attainment, mental health, social development, and long-term well-being. Schools set clear expectations for attendance and punctuality through inductions, handbooks, and regular meetings. While we use letters home, display boards, and awards to celebrate good attendance, we ensure that rewards are part of a broader strategy emphasizing personal responsibility. We avoid an over-reliance on external incentives that can undermine long-term commitment and ensure all proportionate incentives are inclusive and comply with Equality Act duties.

4. Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy is designed to ensure our schools meet their statutory duties and follow government guidance to promote excellent attendance. It is fully compliant with the DfE “Working together to improve school attendance” (August 2024) and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

DEMAT schools adhere to the requirements set out in the **Education Act 1996**, specifically Section 7 regarding the duty of parents to secure education and Section 444 regarding the offence of failing to secure regular attendance. And also align with the **Education Act 2002** (Section 175) regarding safeguarding, and the **Equality Act 2010**, which ensures that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with disabilities. In accordance with the 2024 amendments to the **Education Regulations 2013**, our schools engage in mandatory daily attendance data sharing with the DfE.

Under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, the term "parent" is broadly defined to include biological parents, those with parental responsibility, and any person who has care of the child. All such individuals have a legal duty to ensure the child attends school regularly.

5. Associated DEMAT Policies and Definitions

This policy operates in conjunction with the DEMAT Admissions Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, and SEND Policy.

For the purposes of this document, a **Session** is defined as an AM or PM period, with two sessions per day.

Persistent Absence (PA) refers to attendance below 90% across the academic year, while **Severe Absence** is defined as attendance below 50%.

Compulsory school age begins the term after a child turns five and ends on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they turn sixteen.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Trust Oversight

The CEO approves this policy, while the Trust Board monitors trust-wide attendance and the effectiveness of support and escalation. The Senior Leadership Team (CEO/Director of Education) appoints the Trust Senior Attendance Lead (TSAL) and ensures a trust-wide strategy for resourcing and professional learning. Regional Boards monitor school-level attendance and hold leaders to account for implementation and compliance with these standards.

6.2 Trust Attendance Lead (TAL)

The Trust Attendance Lead (TAL) is a strategic role that ensures consistent, effective attendance systems across all schools. Acting as a bridge between executive strategy and school execution, the TAL drives a trust-wide approach to maximize pupil engagement.

The core mission is to design and implement strategies that optimise resources, support professional development, and ensure all schools exceed statutory and internal performance standards.

1. Strategic Leadership & Vision

- Develop and implement a unified **Trust Attendance Strategy** aligned with national best practices and DfE standards.
- Standardize attendance policies, ensuring a "One Trust" approach while allowing for localized context where necessary.
- Advise the Executive Team on long-term resource allocation to support attendance initiatives.

2. Resourcing & Professional Learning

- **Capacity Building:** Identify gaps in attendance staffing and expertise across the Trust.

- **Professional Development:** Lead a trust-wide **Professional Learning** program for attendance officers, pastoral staff, and senior leaders.
- **Resource Management:** Ensure schools have access to the right tools, data systems, and external support services to manage persistent absence.

3. Accountability & Compliance

- **Standards Enforcement:** Ensure every school remains compliant with the latest legal frameworks and Trust expectations.
- **Reporting:** Synthesize school-level data into high-level reports for Regional Boards, highlighting trends, risks, and successes.
- **Intervention:** Provide targeted support and challenge to schools where attendance data falls below Trust benchmarks.

6.3 The Headteacher's Strategic Mandate for Attendance

1. Strategic Leadership & Cultural Ethos

- **Establish a "Whole School" Ethos:** Build a culture where excellent attendance is expected, valued, and celebrated. Ensure high attendance is recognized as a high-status institutional priority for all staff, pupils, and parents.
- **Set and Communicate High Expectations:** Articulate challenging attendance targets and ensure the school's attendance policy is clearly communicated, consistently applied, and easily understood by the entire school community.
- **Personal Advocacy:** Act as the primary champion for attendance, personally engaging with colleagues and families to reinforce their statutory and moral responsibilities toward education.

2. Accountability & Data Governance

- **Strategic Reporting & Transparency:** Implement a robust strategy for continuous improvement. Provide comprehensive reports to the Central Team and Trustees via Regional Hubs and Hub Directors that utilize comparative longitudinal data, ensuring figures are compared directly with the previous year's performance rather than isolated statistics.
- **Rigorous Monitoring:** Systematically review attendance reports at whole-school, year-group, vulnerable group and classroom levels to identify specific trends or areas of concern. Taking into account National and Local statistics.
- **Public Accountability:** Lead public discussions regarding attendance data, openly celebrating institutional strengths while remaining transparent and proactive about addressing weaknesses.

3. Statutory Oversight & Lawful Authority

- **Statutory Duty Oversight:** Lead on the legal requirements for maintaining accurate admission and attendance registers, ensuring all systems meet or exceed statutory regulations.
- **Lawful Decision Making:** Act as the final authority on making lawful decisions regarding leave of absence requests, ensuring they are only granted in exceptional circumstances.

4. Strategic Delegation & Resource Management

- **Designate a Senior Attendance Lead (SAL):** Appoint a Senior Leadership Team Attendance Lead (SAL) with the delegated authority, time, and specialized resources required to drive whole-school strategy.
- **Resource Management:** Ensure the school has sufficient staffing and logistical resources dedicated to attendance processes, providing direct, unhindered support to families.

5. Targeted Intervention & Support

- **Direct Intervention:** Maintain a hands-on approach with the most persistent absentees. Lead high-level interventions—such as formal family meetings and home visits—to dismantle barriers to learning for the poorest attenders.
- **Barrier Removal:** Ensure that internal systems are not just monitoring absence but are actively removing the obstacles preventing pupils from being in the classroom.

Key Distinction: While the **Senior Attendance Lead** manages the daily strategy and data cycles, the **Headteacher** retains the ultimate legal accountability and the moral authority to drive the "why" behind the numbers.

6.4 Senior Attendance Lead (SAL): Unified Role Profile

1. Strategic Oversight and Data Management

The SAL is the architect of the school's attendance strategy, ensuring data is used to drive improvement.

- **Policy & Planning:** Write, implement, and regularly review the School Attendance Action Plan. Ensure the school's Attendance Policy and Handbook are known and enacted by all staff, including school-specific responsibilities and tiered approach thresholds.
- **Data Analysis:** Monitor attendance weekly at school, year group, and class levels. Evaluate progress towards school targets and compare performance against local and national averages.
- **System Integrity:** Establish and maintain all school attendance spreadsheets. Ensure Bromcom and DfE attendance data is accurate, up-to-date, and distributed across the school.
- **Reporting & Quality Assurance:** Provide frequent (fortnightly), data-driven updates to the Headteacher. Conduct half termly attendance audits and reviews to quality assure all systems and processes.

2. Early Intervention and Pupil Support

The SAL identifies "at-risk" pupils before patterns of persistent absence (missing 10% or more) become entrenched.

- **Identifying Barriers:** Work with families to understand root causes of absence, addressing underlying issues such as SEND needs, mental health, or bullying.
- **Tiered Support:** Work with families to create and oversee the implementation of Attendance Contracts and voluntary support plans. Ensure specific support is in place for pupils with long-term medical conditions or special educational needs.
- **Direct Engagement:** Feed into individual pupil attendance plans and support interventions through family meetings and home visits. Identify and eliminate any collusion with parents who allow absence without good reason.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Make use of reward systems, assemblies, and parents' evenings to recognise and celebrate good attendance.

3. Leadership and School Culture

The SAL ensures that attendance is "everyone's business" and that the school environment encourages being present.

- **Staff Supervision:** Lead and supervise attendance officers, pastoral care workers, and relevant administrative staff. Ensure registers are checked daily and that required actions at each threshold level are taken promptly.
- **Staff Accountability:** Support and/or challenge staff failing to complete registers accurately and on time.
- **Culture Building:** Support the Principal in ensuring the school culture supports good attendance, that all staff know their responsibilities, and in praising strengths and challenging weaknesses in performance.

4. Partnership and Legal Accountability

The SAL acts as the bridge between the school and external agencies to support families with complex needs.

- **Local Authority Liaison:** Work closely with the Local Authority (LA) attendance team, including attending mandated termly Targeting Support Meetings and participation in attendance partnership meetings.
- **Multi-Agency Leadership:** Lead the school's involvement with external partners (Social Care, Early Help, CAMHS) and liaise with LA attendance teams to coordinate support and the allocation of casework.
- **Statutory Enforcement:** Seeks headteacher authorisation on requests for Fixed Penalty Notices or other legal interventions as a last resort, ensuring all supportive avenues have been exhausted and documented.

6.5 Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer manages the daily operational requirements of the school's attendance system, ensuring high levels of data integrity, proactive parent communication, and rigorous compliance with the school's Attendance Strategy.

1. Daily Monitoring & Data Integrity

- **Register Management:** Check all registers in a timely fashion, ensuring absences are coded appropriately according to the school manual. Follow up on errors or gaps immediately.
- **System Oversight:** Lead the daily maintenance of the Management Information System (MIS) and the school attendance spreadsheet.
- **Accountability:** Keep a record for the Senior Attendance Lead (SAL) of any staff failing to complete registers accurately or on time.
- **Reporting:** Generate weekly reports to identify trends at an individual pupil level or declining attendance and report daily AM/PM figures to the Headteacher and Senior Attendance Lead.

2. Communication & Liaison

- **First Response:** Lead "First Day Calling" procedures and serve as the primary point of contact for parents regarding absences.
- **Triage:** Perform initial triage on reasons for absence, passing relevant messages to staff and escalating complex concerns to the SAL or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Meet regularly with the LA attendance team to undertake register checks, analyze data, and implement agreed-upon actions.
- **Home Visits:** Actively participate in home visits as part of the school's intervention strategy.

3. Administrative Compliance & Strategy

- **Documentation:** Issue standard attendance letters and parent contracts, ensuring rigorous follow-up on required responses.Save all on CPOMs.
- **Evidence Management:** Process medical evidence and prepare necessary documentation for Targeted Support Meetings (TSMs).
- **Proactive Analysis:** Flag attendance concerns at both individual and cohort levels to the SAL.
- **System Improvement:** Contribute to the development of attendance management systems by suggesting improvements to current processes.
- **Reporting Support:** Assist the SAL in preparing data for formal reports and statutory attendance returns.

6.6 Teacher Responsibilities: Attendance & Culture

1. High Expectations & Modeling

- **Set the Standard:** Establish and maintain **100% attendance** as the expected norm for all pupils.
- **Consistent Messaging:** Regularly communicate attendance expectations to pupils and parents to ensure clarity and alignment.
- **Professional Modeling:** All staff are responsible for modeling the culture of good attendance and punctuality through their own professional conduct.

2. Safeguarding & Administrative Accuracy

- **Accurate Records:** Ensure registers are completed **accurately and on time** for every session.
- **Procedural Compliance:** Follow all "first-day" procedures and school behavior protocols strictly.
- **Immediate Escalation:** Notify the **Attendance Officer (AO)** of all parent communications regarding absences.
    - Inform the **Head or SAL** immediately regarding attendance concerns.
    - **Safeguarding:** Escalate concerns immediately where attendance patterns indicate potential safeguarding risks.

3. Classroom Culture & Relationships

- **Inclusive Environment:** Build a classroom culture of belonging that is warm, welcoming, and aligns with broader school values.
- **Personal Connection:** Develop strong personal links with both pupils and parents to foster a supportive community.
- **Individual Response:** Personally engage with pupils regarding their attendance records—this includes both addressing concerns and rewarding success or improvement according to school policy.

4. Academic Continuity

- **Catch-up Support:** Provide structured opportunities for absentees to complete missed work so they do not fall behind.
- **Parental Partnership:** Where appropriate, engage parents to assist in reinforcing missed learning at home to maintain academic momentum.

Note: These responsibilities bridge the gap between administrative duty and pastoral care, ensuring that attendance is viewed as a vital component of pupil welfare and achievement.

7. Systems and Processes (Bromcom MIS)

All schools within the Trust are required to follow the procedures, guides, and scripts set out in the **Attendance Handbook** to ensure full compliance and consistency.

Registers must be taken in Bromcom at the start of each morning session and once in the afternoon, strictly adhering to the timings outlined in Appendix A.

Schools utilize national DfE attendance and absence codes, with the specific requirement that any Code N must be resolved within five school days or it will automatically convert to an unauthorised Code O.

To maintain a clear audit trail, any manual amendments to the register must show the original and amended entries, the reason for the change, the date, and the staff member responsible.

Furthermore, DEMAT utilizes VYED and MAT Vision dashboards for analysis, supported by daily data sharing with the DfE via Bromcom. As an additional safeguarding measure, teachers perform in-day checks to immediately flag any child not present during key points such as phonics or lunch.

8. Daily Attendance Procedures and Mandatory Triggers

8.1 Gates, Punctuality, and First-Day Response

A member of SLT will always greet pupils at the gate during the timeframe defined in Appendix A. Pupils arriving after the gate opens but before the register closes are coded **L** (Late); those arriving after the register closes are coded **U** (Unauthorised) unless an unavoidable reason is accepted. DEMAT's expectation is that registers close **30 minutes** after opening. If a pupil is absent with no reason provided, the school will contact parents on the same day via phone, text, or email. Where contact cannot be established and risk indicators exist, the school will consider a same-day home visit or a police welfare check.

8.2 Mandatory Intervention Triggers

To maintain the highest standards of rigor, all staff must adhere to the following intervention triggers:

- **96% Attendance Alert:** The Class Teacher must initiate a phone call or meeting with the family as soon as a pupil's attendance falls to 96%.
- **3-Day Absence Rule:** A home visit will be conducted with a formal letter delivered to parents after three consecutive days of absence if no reason has been provided. Medical evidence will be requested where a pupil has been absent for 3 consecutive days even if reasons for absence are provided.
- **5-Day Welfare Check:** A home visit will be conducted for any child absent for five days, regardless of whether the absence is reported or authorised, to serve as a mandatory wellbeing check.

9. Early Help, Targeted Support, and Inclusion

9.1 The Tiered Response Framework

Our strategy combines a **Tiered Approach** with **Early Intervention** and **Multi-Disciplinary Support**. We utilize a graduated response that balances robust universal prevention with tailored reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, health needs, or social care involvement.

The following table outlines our escalating levels of response, ensuring that the "golden hour" of contact is met and barriers are identified early.

Level	Attendance Threshold	Core Strategy	Key Actions
Tier 1 & 2: Universal Prevention	96% – 100%	**Proactive Awareness**	Clear expectations via newsletters, assemblies, and PSHE; recognition of good attendance; personalized data sharing.
Tier 3: Early Intervention	90% – 96%	**Barrier Removal**	Golden hour contact; "catch-up" work; family meetings to identify triggers; initiating Attendance Contracts.
Tier 4: Intensive Support	Below 90% (PA)	**Multi-Agency Action**	Formal attendance plans; collaboration with Local Authority; legal intervention if necessary.
Tier 5: Specialist Support	Below 50% (SA)	**Crisis Management**	Intensive case management; multi-disciplinary teams; potential for exceptional part-time timetables.

9.2. Multi-Disciplinary & Targeted Support

For pupils facing complex barriers, we move beyond standard school-wide systems to a multi-disciplinary approach. This ensures that the response is not just disciplinary, but holistic.

- **SEND & Health Needs:** We apply Reasonable Adjustments (e.g., modified uniform, transport routines) and implement Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs).
- **Vulnerable Cohorts:** For Looked-After Children (CLA) or those with a Social Worker, we provide enhanced monitoring and guaranteed same-day contact for any unexplained absence.
- **Collaborative Oversight:** Decisions regarding part-time timetables must be authorized by the LA, Headteacher, SENCO and parents, with a mandatory reintegration review every fortnight.

9.3. Communication Strategy: The "Golden Hour" & Beyond

We raise the profile of attendance through a "variety of voices" and immediate action.

The Golden Hour Guarantee: Every pupil at risk of declining attendance receives personal contact within the first hour of a recorded absence to ensure immediate engagement and support.

Communication Channels include:

- **Digital:** Texting, Email, School Website, and Visual Displays.
- **In-Person:** Parent presentations, face-to-face meetings, and parent consultations.
- **Written:** Newsletters, letters home, and notice boards.

9.4. Monitoring and Sustaining Progress

The goal of our graduated response is to ensure that support and challenge grow in tandem.

1. **Identification:** Early identification of risks when attendance hits **96%**.
2. **Implementation:** All relevant staff are briefed on the supportive strategies and "catch-up" interventions.
3. **Review:** Regular monitoring of attendance data is shared back with families to celebrate successes or adjust individual plans.

10 Vulnerable Groups

The school identifies and monitors specific groups of vulnerable pupils to ensure continuity of learning and targeted support. These pupils must be known to the **SAL, AO**, and other relevant colleagues. Tailored action plans will outline support if required for:

- Gypsy, Roma, and Travellers (GRT)
- Asylum seekers and Refugees
- Looked After Children (LAC)
- Children with a Child Protection (CP) plan
- Children Missing from Education (CME) / Not receiving suitable education
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Young Carers

10.1 Support and Intervention Protocols

The school attendance team will regularly review the progress of any pupil exhibiting attendance difficulties. This review process facilitates appropriate referrals to ensure both the child and family are supported in accessing education.

Mental Health & Early Intervention: Recognizing the post-pandemic increase in absence related to mental health, staff are trained to identify early warning signs. Early interventions include:

- Targeted internal support.
- Referrals to school counsellors.
- Engagement with Early Help and specialist mental health services.

10.2 Statutory Compliance for Specific Categories

Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) Pupils: To support the cultural and professional mobility of GRT families, the school uses the **national attendance code (T)** when families travel for occupational purposes. This is contingent on parents providing clear proposed return dates.

11. Children Missing Education (CME)

All school-aged children have a fundamental right to receive an appropriate education. To ensure no child is "lost" to the system, the school maintains a proactive stance on tracking and engagement in alignment with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and Local Authority mandates.

11.1. Mandatory Register & Attendance Protocols

The school adheres to strict reporting requirements regarding the movement of pupils:

- **Register Changes:** The Local Authority (LA) is notified of any additions to or deletions from the school register that occur outside of standard transition points.
- **The 10-Day Rule:** If a pupil fails to attend for **10 consecutive days** without a valid or confirmed explanation, a formal referral is made to the LA CME team.
- **Unknown Whereabouts:** If a pupil's whereabouts become unknown, or if there are immediate safeguarding concerns, the school will immediately trigger emergency protocols under KCSIE.

11.2. Relocation and Off-Rolling Procedures

We do not remove a child from the school roll based on minimal information. When a family informs the school of a relocation, the School Attendance Officer must obtain, verify and inform the LA of:

- Confirmed destination (city/country).
- New residential forwarding address.
- Details of the new school/education provider.

11.3. Roles and Responsibilities

The **School Attendance Officer** acts as the primary internal lead and will:

- **Investigate:** Make all reasonable enquiries swiftly and thoroughly, including phone calls, home visits, and social care/housing/GP enquiries to confirm residency.
- **Collaborate:** Coordinate with the Attendance Lead and LA Statutory Attendance team to identify, refer, and track children at risk of missing education.
- **Refer:** Ensure any CME is referred to the relevant Local Authority CME officer within **10 working days**, following all statutory processes.
- **Network:** Work alongside key stakeholders in the LA Attendance Team to ensure inter-agency awareness of the referral process.

11.4. Statutory Oversight

The **LA Statutory Attendance Officer** and **LA CME Officer** are the lead professionals for tracking CME. School staff are required to support these officers by providing robust data and following guidance to ensure the safety and educational continuity of every pupil.

12. Leave of Absence and Legal Intervention

Headteachers may only grant leave in circumstances permitted by regulation and guidance; holidays and travel for leisure are not considered exceptional. Requests must be made in advance by the parent with whom the child normally lives. Examples of leave that will not normally be authorised include cheaper holidays, birthdays, shopping, or routine appointments.

12.1 National Penalty Notice Framework (2024)

A threshold of **10 sessions of unauthorised absence** in a rolling ten-school-week period triggers the consideration of a Penalty Notice. A **Notice to Improve** (3–6 week period) may be used where support is appropriate but not engaged with.

- **First Offence:** £160 fine (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days).
- **Second Offence:** If a second fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within three years, it is charged at a flat rate of £160.
- **Third Offence:** A third fine cannot be issued; the case moves directly to prosecution.
- **Penalty Notices:** First PN £80 (within 21 days) rising to £160 (within 28 days); second PN within three years is a flat £160. Maximum **two PNs** per parent per child in any rolling **3-year** period.
- Beyond two PNs, consider other interventions (e.g., prosecution, Attendance Contracts, Education Supervision Orders, Parenting Orders).
- Safeguarding duties must be considered in any decision.

13. Working with cross-border pupils

Where a pupil lives in one local authority area and attends a DEMAT academy in another, both the 'School LA' and the 'Home LA' should work together to support the pupil and family, aligned with safeguarding responsibilities and local processes.

14. Alternative provision and off-site education

- Use the correct DfE codes for off-site education (**B/P/V/W/K** etc.).
- Commissioning arrangements set out responsibilities for daily attendance checks, reporting and escalation.

15. Monitoring, Data Protection, and Review

The Trust Attendance Lead (TAL) is responsible for setting attendance targets for each school at the start of the academic year. These targets are designed to be ambitious, taking into full account the DfE attendance baseline improvement targets to ensure that no school falls below the national average.

- **Implementation:** Headteachers incorporate these TAL-set targets into their School Development Plans (SDP) and communicate them to all staff.
- **Accountability:** The School SAL leads the implementation of a rigorous approach to monitoring, ensuring that all staff are clear on their roles in securing high attendance and providing challenge where these standards are not met.

15.1. Rigorous Data Tracking and Analysis

Schools maintain a comprehensive data suite to identify patterns and direct resources effectively.

Key Data Metrics:

- Overall and persistent absence (PA) levels.
- Individual pupil records: unauthorized/authorized absence, exclusions, lateness, approved educational activity, and dual registration.

- **Vulnerable Pupil Tracking:** Specific focus on reducing severe absence of targeted vulnerable groups and supporting cross-border pupils through collaboration between the 'School LA' and 'Home LA'.

Reporting & Review Cycle:

- **Weekly: School Attendance Officers:** analyze patterns, prioritizing PA or severe absence cases. Reporting to the School Attendance Lead.
- **Fortnightly:** Attendance is discussed at DSL/SLT meetings and general staff meetings.
- **Half-Termly:** Deep-dive analysis is reported to Regional Boards, including local and national benchmarking.
- **Annually:** A formal Trust Attendance Audit is led by each Headteacher alongside the School attendance Lead.

15.2. Intervention and Targeted Support

The School SAL oversees a School Attendance Action Plan informed by cohort and individual data analysis.

- **Targeted Support:** Implementation of pre-emptive strategies for declining attendance and bespoke first-day absence protocols.
- **External Partnership:** Collaboration with agencies such as CAMHS or CHUMS to support pupils with complex barriers to attendance.
- **Review:** Action plans are reviewed regularly with the SLT, Attendance Officers (AOs), and the Trust Attendance Lead if the schools attendance falls below 96%.

15.3. Records, Data Protection, and Review

- **Documentation:** All registration data, correspondence, parent contracts, and home visits are recorded daily and stored per school policy.
- **System Integrity:** Data is processed under public task or legal obligation bases and held securely in Bromcom with role-based access.
- **Policy Review:** This strategy is reviewed annually, or sooner if DfE regulations or baseline targets change.