# Attendance Policy

# St Peter's CofE Primary School, Whetstone

Embrace Multi Academy Trust strives to maintain and improve good provision and outcomes at each of its member schools. Based upon our shared ethos and our values of wisdom, collaboration, respect, integrity, inclusivity, and compassion, we aim to support the learning and development of every person within the trust and our policies are written from this perspective.

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This policy has been developed based on a template on 'The Key'

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# 1. Aims

We recognise that attendance is a safeguarding, welfare and educational priority. Good attendance is the foundation for positive outcomes, wellbeing, achievement and inclusion. Attendance improvement is the responsibility of all staff and is central to our work with children and families

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: July 2026, through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- 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 Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026 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

# 3. Roles and responsibilities

## 3.1. The board of trustees and local governing committees

Responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Ensuring regular review of attendance data for vulnerable groups including pupils with SEND, children with a social worker, pupils eligible for pupil premium, young carers and any other groups identified through school attendance analysis.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, 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.

### 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 fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Working with the parents 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 through all available channels.

### 3.3. The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader 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 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.
- Leading regular attendance reviews and Targeting Support Meetings with the Local Authority attendance team where required.
- Ensuring attendance interventions are evaluated and adapted based on impact.
- Coordinating support for persistently and severely absent pupils.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Paul Bolstridge and can contacted via phone on 01162 775 750 or via email on office@stpeters.embracemat.org

### 3.4. The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).
- 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 Samantha Cook and can be contacted via phone on 01162 775 750 or via email on office@stpeters.embracemat.org.

### 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 registration time in the morning and afternoon.

### 3.6. Admin/office staff

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 attendance officer where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

### 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 (ie lives with and looks after them).

Parents are expected to:

- 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 one 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 Paul Bolstridge – Headteacher who can be contacted via phone on 01162 775 750 or via email on office@stpeters.embracemat.org

### 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 onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second 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 an approved off-site educational activity.
- Absent.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

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.

*Attendance data is reported daily to the Department for Education (DfE) in line with* statutory *guidance.* 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 8:45am and ends at 3:15pm. Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 8:50am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:15pm and will be kept open until 1:20pm.

## 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 8:30am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via phone on 01162775750 or via email on office@stpeters.embracemat.org

If, when ringing, the call goes to the office voicemail, please leave a clear message stating the child's name, class and the reason for the absence.

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 longer than 5 days, or 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. The school will not routinely request medical evidence and will not operate blanket requirements for medical evidence. Evidence will only be requested where there is a genuine concern about the authenticity of an illness absence or where longer-term support planning is required.

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

## 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.

Please notify the office as soon as possible and supply any relevant paperwork.

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.

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. See 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

The school monitors punctuality daily through its attendance management system. Patterns of lateness are identified and reviewed regularly by Paul Bolstridge, Headteacher, and Samantha Cook, Attendance Officer.

Where a pupil experiences repeated lateness, the school will:

- Speak with the pupil and parent/carer to understand any barriers affecting punctuality.
- Notify parents when concerns are identified and discuss strategies to improve arrival times.
- Monitor and track punctuality over an agreed period.
- Provide support where appropriate, including signposting to additional services if wider family circumstances are impacting attendance.
- Arrange meetings with parents/carers if lateness continues despite initial support.
- Implement an attendance or punctuality action plan where necessary.
- Refer to the Local Authority Attendance Team where concerns persist and support has not resulted in improvement.

The school adopts a supportive, child-centred approach and will always seek to work in partnership with families to improve punctuality before considering any formal attendance interventions. However, regular lateness can have a significant impact on learning, wellbeing and a child's sense of belonging, and parents are expected to ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.

Pupils arriving after the start of the school day must report to the school office and be signed in by a parent/carer. Persistent lateness will be recorded and may form part of the school's wider attendance monitoring procedures.

### 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 decide to conduct a home visit. If this is unsuccessful, the school may then contact the police.
- 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, a penalty notice or legal interventions outlined in section 5.2

### 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 through termly parents' evenings, End of Year Reports and bespoke communications in the case of children whose attendance falls below certain parameters.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1. Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

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
- 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 situations that are unique, unavoidable and sufficiently serious to justify a pupil being absent from school. They are not events that could reasonably be arranged outside term time, such as holidays or family trips.

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 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of 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.
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made).

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, 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.

## 5.2. Sanctions

Our 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), 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, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it 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

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 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.

They 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 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

# 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Strategies for improving attendance at St Peter's include:

- attendance celebrated weekly in Celebration Assembly
- attendance features on monthly newsletter
- attendance display showing weekly class percentages
- class attendance recognition
- improved attendance certificates
- attendance discussed during parent meetings
- attendance contracts where appropriate.

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

## 7.1. Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Our approach to supporting pupils with complex barriers to attendance is based on the principles of early identification, graduated support, partnership with families and multi-agency working. We recognise that poor attendance is often a symptom of wider challenges and that sustainable improvement is achieved through understanding and addressing the underlying barriers rather than focusing solely on attendance data.

In line with the graduated support model, interventions increase in intensity according to the level of need, with regular review and adaptation of support plans.

**Universal Support**

For all pupils, we promote positive attendance through a welcoming school culture, strong relationships, clear expectations and regular communication with families. Attendance is monitored daily, with emerging concerns identified at the earliest opportunity.

**Targeted Support**

Where attendance concerns begin to emerge, we work proactively with pupils and families to understand barriers and put in place appropriate support. This may include:

- **Family meetings** with parents/carers, pupils and key staff to explore barriers, build trust and agree practical solutions.
- Development of an **Attendance Action Plan**, clearly setting out:
    - identified barriers;
    - agreed support strategies;
    - actions for school, family and pupil;
    - review dates and success measures.
- Identification and removal of **in-school barriers**, such as:
    - difficulties with friendships or peer relationships;
    - anxiety linked to specific lessons, staff or environments;

    - unmet SEND needs;
    - sensory or communication difficulties;
    - concerns regarding bullying, emotional wellbeing or mental health.
- Reasonable adjustments where appropriate, including phased starts, safe spaces, key adult support, adapted timetables or transition plans.

**Enhanced Support**

Where attendance does not improve or barriers are more complex, a coordinated and multi-agency response is initiated. Support may include:

- More frequent review meetings with families.
- Attendance contracts which clarify expectations, support available and shared responsibilities.
- Referral to or consultation with the LCC Attendance Support Team to provide additional challenge, advice and targeted intervention.
- Early Help assessments and referrals where wider family circumstances are impacting attendance, enabling access to coordinated support from relevant agencies.
- Collaboration with SEND, pastoral, inclusion and safeguarding teams to ensure barriers are fully understood and addressed.

**Intensive and Multi-Agency Support**

For pupils experiencing persistent or severe attendance difficulties, particularly where concerns relate to vulnerability, trauma, mental health, family instability or safeguarding, support becomes increasingly intensive.

This may include:

- Regular multi-agency meetings and Team Around the Family approaches.
- Individual reintegration plans and bespoke attendance pathways.
- Engagement with health professionals, SEND services or other specialist agencies where appropriate.
- Ongoing review of educational provision and reasonable adjustments.
- A safeguarding assessment where attendance concerns indicate potential neglect, exploitation, risk of harm or other welfare concerns. Attendance is always considered within the wider safeguarding context, and concerns are acted upon in line with statutory safeguarding procedures.

School recognises that young carers can face additional barriers to attendance. Where caring responsibilities are impacting attendance, the school will work collaboratively with pupils, families and external agencies to identify support and remove barriers to regular attendance.

## 7.2. Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

We recognise that some pupils face significant barriers to attendance arising from their **mental health, physical health needs or special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)**.

Our approach is rooted in the principles of inclusion, early intervention and the graduated support model, ensuring that pupils receive the right support at the right time to maintain their connection with education and achieve the best possible attendance outcomes.

We work collaboratively with pupils, families, health professionals and external agencies to understand individual circumstances and develop personalised support that enables pupils to access education safely and successfully.

**Early Identification and Collaborative Working**

Where absence is linked to health needs or SEND, we seek to establish an early understanding of the barriers affecting attendance through:

- Regular communication with parents/carers.
- Meetings involving the pupil, family and relevant school staff.
- Consideration of medical evidence and professional advice where appropriate.
- Involvement of SEND, pastoral, attendance and safeguarding leads as required.
- Close monitoring of attendance patterns and wellbeing indicators.

We recognise that building trust and maintaining positive relationships with families is critical to securing long-term improvements in attendance.

**Attendance Support Planning**

Where attendance is affected by health or SEND-related needs, we develop an individualised **Attendance Support Plan** which may include:

- Identified barriers to attendance.
- Agreed reasonable adjustments.
- Short-term and long-term attendance goals.
- Actions for school, family and pupil.
- Review arrangements and success criteria.
- Responsibilities of all parties involved.

Plans are reviewed regularly and adapted in response to progress, changing needs or professional advice.

**Reasonable Adjustments and Removing In-School Barriers**

To support attendance and successful participation in school life, we consider and implement reasonable adjustments appropriate to the pupil's needs. These may include:

- Adjustments to the school day or timetable.
- Access to a safe space or quiet room.
- Flexible arrival and departure arrangements.
- Support from a named key adult.
- Modified lesson transitions.
- Adaptations to learning environments to reduce sensory overload.
- Enhanced pastoral support.

- Temporary alternative arrangements for specific lessons or activities where anxiety or health factors are significant.

Our focus is on removing barriers while maintaining high aspirations for engagement and inclusion.

**Phased Return Arrangements**

For pupils returning following a period of ill health, mental health difficulties or significant absence, we may implement a **phased return plan**. These arrangements are:

- Individually tailored.
- Time-limited and regularly reviewed.
- Designed to gradually increase attendance and participation.
- Developed in partnership with families and, where appropriate, health professionals.

The aim is to support successful reintegration while avoiding overwhelming the pupil.

**SEND-Specific Support**

Where a pupil's attendance difficulties are linked to SEND, we review whether current provision is meeting need and consider additional support through the graduated approach.

This may include:

- Reviewing SEND support plans and outcomes.
- Additional assessments.
- Increased specialist intervention.
- Consultation with external professionals.
- Requesting an **Early Annual Review** or interim review of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where attendance concerns indicate that needs may have changed significantly or current provision is no longer effective.

Attendance concerns are considered as part of the wider assessment of a pupil's educational needs and inclusion within school.

**Transport and Access Issues**

We recognise that transport difficulties can be a significant barrier for some pupils, particularly those with medical needs or SEND. Where transport issues affect attendance, we work with families and the local authority to:

- Understand the specific difficulties being experienced.
- Explore practical solutions and temporary arrangements.
- Support applications or reviews relating to transport provision where appropriate.
- Ensure that transport concerns do not unnecessarily impede access to education.

**Multi-Agency Working and Local Authority Involvement**

Where needs are complex or attendance remains significantly affected despite school-based support, we engage relevant external agencies and local authority services. This may include:

- Health professionals and mental health services.
- SEND services.
- Early Help and family support services.
- Attendance Support Team and Inclusion Services.

Where attendance difficulties meet local authority thresholds, or where statutory duties apply, the school will make appropriate **local authority notifications** and referrals in accordance with guidance and local procedures.

**Safeguarding and Welfare Considerations**

Absence linked to health needs or SEND is always viewed through a safeguarding lens. If concerns arise regarding a pupil's welfare, access to education, unmet needs or potential risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed alongside attendance support processes.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan 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.

Remote education will only be used in exceptional circumstances and as a short-term part of an agreed reintegration or support plan. Pupils receiving remote education remain absent from school and appropriate attendance codes will continue to be used. The school will prioritise reintegration into full-time education wherever possible.

### 7.3. Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

- Identify the pupil as requiring reintegration support following a lengthy or unavoidable absence.
- Arrange a reintegration meeting with the pupil, parents/carers and key staff.
- Discuss any ongoing barriers to attendance and agree appropriate support.
- Develop an Attendance Support Plan with clear actions, responsibilities and review dates.
- Implement a phased return if required, based on the pupil's needs and any professional advice.
- Provide additional pastoral support, including access to a trusted adult and regular wellbeing check-ins.
- Put in place curriculum catch-up support to address missed learning and rebuild confidence.
- Maintain regular communication with parents/carers throughout the reintegration process.
- Review progress regularly and adjust support as needed.
- Gradually step down support once the pupil has successfully returned to full-time attendance and engagement.

## 8. Attendance monitoring

### 8.1. Monitoring attendance

Attendance data is reviewed weekly, half-termly, termly and annually across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. Weekly attendance reviews are

undertaken by school leaders to identify emerging concerns and enable early intervention.

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

The school has granted the DfE access to certain aspects of 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 national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the local governance committee.

## 8.2. 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
- Analysis will include attendance patterns for:
- pupils with SEND
- children with a social worker
- looked after and previously looked after children
- disadvantaged pupils
- pupils eligible for pupil premium
- young carers
- any additional cohorts identified through school attendance analysis.

## 8.3. 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 it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the local governing committee 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.

## 8.4. 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. Where attendance becomes persistently absent (below 90%) or severely absent (below 50%), the school will implement enhanced support and may involve the Local Authority Attendance Team, Early Help Services and other relevant agencies through a graduated response.

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 5.2, above)

## 8.5. Attendance Contracts

Where voluntary support has not secured sufficient improvement in attendance, the school may work with families and the Local Authority to establish an Attendance Contract. Attendance Contracts provide a formal framework for support and set out agreed actions and responsibilities to improve attendance.

### 8.6. Targeting Support Meetings

The school will participate in Targeting Support Meetings with the Local Authority where attendance concerns require multi-agency intervention. These meetings support the identification of barriers, coordination of services and review of attendance improvement strategies.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

The policy will be published on the school website and reviewed whenever DfE guidance or local authority procedures change and as a minimum annually by the Trust Leader. At every review, the policy will be approved by the board of trustees.

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour 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 (eg due to adverse weather) |
| **Y5** | Criminal justice detention | Pupil is unable to attend as they are:<br>• In police detention<br>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or<br>• 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 |