



Attendance Policy

Policy Author	Tim Beavan
Date Ratified	September 2024
Ratified by	Full Governing Board
Statutory	Yes
On school website	Yes
Main updates since last policy	Updated to reflect changes to Working Together to Improve School Attendance (Aug 2024) and systems and protocols within school

1. Aims

A key factor in academic achievement is a child's attendance at school. We believe that it is only by attending regularly at school that children can achieve highly and fulfil their potential by taking advantage of the opportunities available to them. Children who miss lessons risk falling behind in their learning; statistics prove that children with poor attendance achieve less well at both primary and secondary school compared to their peers with better attendance.

Attendance	Description	Approximate days lost per year
99% - 100%	Excellent	0-4
96% - 98%	Good	5-9
95%	Satisfactory	10-13
90% - 94%	Unsatisfactory	14-18
Less than 90%	Persistent absence	More than 19 days

All stakeholders of the school community including pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and Governors, have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this. The policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the school community are made aware of the policy and have access to it.

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 \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) 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 School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

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 governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- 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
- 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
- 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) – alongside the SENDCo - to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including 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

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mr Beavan and he can be contacted via 01628 626724 or by email on office@wessexprimary.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 when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Miss Adams and can be contacted via 01628 626724 or by email on office@wessexprimary.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 the end of morning and afternoon registration.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on Arbor
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the attendance lead, 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 (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day **and** on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:55am on the day of the absence, 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

- Keep to any attendance contracts that may be made with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the school

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register on Arbor and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the 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 an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- 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.

The above information will all be recorded and traceable on Arbor.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not (for pupils of compulsory school age)
- 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.

Timings for the school day are as follows:

- The school day starts at 8:45am and ends at 3:20pm.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45am and will be kept open until 8:55am.
- For EYFS and KS1, the register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm and will be kept open until 1:05pm.
- For KS2, the register for the second session will be taken at 1:15pm and will be kept open until 1:20pm.

4.3 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 8:55am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling or emailing the school.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 calendar 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.

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 and provides medical evidence of the appointment – e.g. a confirmation email of the appointment or appointment card.

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. 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
- Pupils who attend school after 8:55am should be accompanied by a parent/carer to the school office where the reason for late attendance will be determined and recorded

The attendance officer and designated senior leader responsible for attendance will meet termly to discuss any pupils who are persistently late to school. This may result in a letter being sent or phone call being had with the child's parents or carers informing them that there is an expectation for this to improve. The parent may be invited in to discuss the pattern of lateness and explain what will happen to prevent this situation from continuing to happen.

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 / carer to establish the whereabouts of the child and that they are safe. School staff will make every effort to establish contact with the parent or carer and speak to them to confirm where the child is.
- Identify if 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

- If the school is unable to establish contact with the parents, the school will contact the emergency numbers provided. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will routinely share a list of vulnerable children with the school office team, and the office team will notify the DSL immediately if a child on that list is not in school, on the first day of absence, and each subsequent day. If the pupil has a social worker or a youth offending team worker, they will also be informed if there are unexplained absences from school.
- If, after trying to contact the emergency numbers provided by parents / carers, school staff are unable to ascertain the reason for a child's absence, the school may escalate the concern by attending the home address and/or contacting the Local Authority Educational Welfare Office, Children's Social Care and/or contacting the Police.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the school may choose to issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below).

The school will attempt to call / email 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 escalating the concern by attending the home address and/or contacting children's Social Care and/or contacting the Police.

4.6 Referral to the Child Missing Education (CME) Service

If, after repeated attempts, we are unable to contact any family to establish for sure where a child is, the school is obliged to make a referral to the local authority to say this is a child 'missing education.' This is an important safeguarding duty and it ensure that circumstances where children are missing from education are swiftly and appropriately responded to. This will be in accordance with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the local authority education welfare service procedures.

4.7 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents and carers about their child's attendance and absence levels through contact with class teachers, attendance certificates, school reports and letters sent home. Each pupil's attendance information is available to parents via the parent portal of Arbor.

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.

'Exceptional circumstances' may include the following but not be limited to:

- A major family event such as the wedding or funeral of a close relative
- Serious or terminal illness of a close relative
- Significant family trauma has occurred and it is believed that a break is in the child's best interests
- High level representation at a particular sport or discipline

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 two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or by contacting 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. *Other types of cultural observance will be considered on a case by case basis by the school. If the request is for more than one day, this will also be considered on a case by case basis. Day One is recorded as code R and subsequent days as code C. Parent/carers will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.*
- 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

Unauthorised absences

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of unauthorised absence would be:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- The parent / carer has medical appointment or is unwell
- Siblings are unwell so the child is not coming in
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- The pupil is staying at home to mind the house
- Staying at home to care for a sick or disabled parent / carer / family member.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

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, 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

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.

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

See appendix 2 for an example of what a notice to improve letter may contain.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Good attendance is celebrated throughout the school.

Classes with the highest attendance at the end of each week in EYFS/KS1 and KS2 are announced and celebrated in assembly, receiving the attendance cup. Each winning class may have a period of extra playtime.

At the end of each term and academic year, pupils with excellent attendance receive a certificate at the end of term celebration assembly. Excellent attendance is not necessarily 100% attendance but should reflect attendance significantly above school average.

Pupils with 100% attendance at the end of the academic year will receive an attendance commendation certificate.

Attendance data is considered in the application process for the school's Junior Leader positions.

Individual attendance incentives are set and put in place as part of the attendance meetings which take place between parents / carers, Attendance Lead and Attendance Support Worker. These incentives may include providing alarm clocks, giving small stickers or other small items as targeted rewards.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Where there is an emerging pattern for a pupil's absence or if staff are particularly concerned, the school will contact the parents or carers to discuss reasons for the absences with them. Plans will be put in place with the family and pupil to resolve any identified difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit. It will be explained to parents that any future absences may be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them. If the pattern persists, a Penalty Notice referral may be issued where no improvement is seen.

Our approach to tackling unacceptable levels of absence is bespoke and takes into account the individual circumstances of the family. The school recognise that absence may be a symptom of other challenges, and we aim to help address those challenges.

Tackling excessive sickness absence (Code I and code M)

In aiming to maintain an attendance level of at least 96% across an academic year, a child cannot miss more than 8 days in total. The school uses this benchmark to consider carefully how we define excessive sickness absence.

We recognise that some of our pupils have medical conditions or disabilities that necessitate them having more days than this.

Where a pupil has no known diagnosis and misses many days due to sickness absence over a period of time, or misses many days due to other illnesses not related to their diagnosis, the parents/carers will be warned that in order to authorise any further absence due to illness, medical evidence will be required, even if it is for half a day.

We would always give plenty of warning, opportunities for discussion and implement support from other agencies where we can for families, before that decision is taken. This may include a referral to early help (from the local authority) who have access to health professionals who can advise and support. This requirement will never be a surprise or brought in too quickly.

We view medical evidence as something that does not place additional pressures on health professionals, something that is easily obtainable:

- Appointment slip
- Prescription issued

- Email /text message confirming appointment
- Mobile phone record to show the number you called and the duration of the call.

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance, such as mental or physical ill health or SEND.

The school works pro-actively to ensure that school is a welcoming place for pupils. Staff exemplify the school values and follow routines which means that pupils feel welcomed and valued in the school. Some of these strategies include:

- Members of the Senior Leadership team welcoming pupils and families at the gate each morning
- Teaching and support staff welcoming pupils and families to classroom doors each morning
- Nurture and ELSA staff at school who are able to work with pupils with identified emotional needs
- Strong relationships with the Local Emotional Mental Health Team
- Bespoke approach to reintegration for pupils with severe absence, which may include home visits, support from partner agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Social Prescribers or the Virtual School
- Regular meetings to evaluate progress, set targets and explore other support such as [Emotionally Related School Avoidance](#) support through the Local Authority

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.

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

Where pupils have been absent from school for a longer period of time, the school will ensure that all necessary measures will be taken for the pupil to return to school feeling confident. Strategies may include:

- Informal check-in reintegration visits to the school prior to returning
- Time with their friends or teachers in small group situations
- Risk assessments bring devised, where necessary
- Re-integration timetable drawn up to increase time at school over a fixed period
- Soft start to the day, such as coming in through a different door or beginning the day with a pastoral session
- Key learning concepts that the child has missed being shared with them prior to their return. This may be through the sharing of curriculum maps, termly overviews or being provided with links to online learning that covers the same objectives that the child has missed
- Increased pastoral support, such as having a key adult to go to throughout the day
- Regular review meetings between the school, the pupil and parents or carers to evaluate progress

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

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

Attendance is monitored internally in the following ways:

- Daily absence reports shared with the Designated Safeguarding Team with follow up actions as necessary, particularly with those pupils identified as vulnerable
- Weekly meetings between the Designated Safeguarding Team to review any pupils where attendance concerns exist and to monitor the impact of any actions taken
- Termly monitoring between the Attendance Office and the Headteacher
- Three meetings a year with the Educational Welfare Officer
- Attendance is reported to Governors six times a year as it features as part of the Headteacher's Report to Governors

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 share this with the governing board.

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

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop 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 external professionals or partner agencies, 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)

- 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.

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
- Write to parents to share the level of their child's attendance and the impact that this has on their child's learning
- 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, such as an early help referral
- 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)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by The Senior Member of Staff Responsible for Attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding 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 (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given

		would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 – an example of a notice to improve letter that could be sent to parents / carers

Dear

School attendance is hugely important. For your child to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, wellbeing, and wider development, they need to attend on time, every day possible.

If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the child's parent may be guilty of an offence under s.444 Education Act 1996.

The school have offered support to you and your family to try and help improve Your child's attendance, including:

- 1. Telephone calls.** The school contacted you when your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer their support with any issues your child may be having.
- 2. An Attendance Overview Letter.** The school wrote to you, letting you know about XXXX's attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
- 3. An Attendance Support Meeting Invite.** The school invited you to a meeting to discuss your child's unauthorised absences and to offer support to ensure that their attendance improved. You were notified of the consequences should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and you did not effectively engage with the support offered.

Unfortunately, despite the support that was offered to your family, attendance remains a cause for concern. Between **XXXXX** and **XXXXX** the pupil failed to attend regularly at **school** which resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.

You now have thirty school days (6 weeks) in which to improve your child's attendance. During this time your child must show significant improvements in attendance and avoid having any unauthorised absences from school during this period. Should we not see sufficient improvement and further unauthorised absences take place during this period, a penalty notice may be issued. NB – If unauthorised absences are recorded, a penalty notice may be issued before the end of this improvement period.

More information regarding this notice can be found on [RBWM's School Attendance webpages](#).

If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss what further support is available within school, please contact XXXXX