



THE EARLS HIGH SCHOOL

EXCELLENCE | CARE | PARTNERSHIP

Attendance Policy

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1. The importance of attendance at The Earls High School

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 \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#).

School attendance is not just a legal requirement but is intrinsically linked to safeguarding the young people in our care. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it a vital aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

- **Academic Achievement:** Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- **Social Development:** School provides a vital social environment for children and adolescents to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- **Building Routine:** School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- **Teacher Interaction:** Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- **Preventing Knowledge Gaps:** Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.
- **School Engagement:** Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extracurricular activities, sports, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- **Legal and Parental Responsibility:** Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.

2. Factors affecting attendance

We will create a welcoming, inclusive culture that sets high expectations of punctuality and attendance. We aim to build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them. There are many factors which can impact on a child attending school.

- **Health Issues:** Children may experience physical or mental health issues that lead to absences. Chronic illnesses, infections, and mental health conditions can impact a student's ability to attend school regularly.
- **Family Circumstances:** Family-related factors such as bereavement, family illness, or caring responsibilities can result in absences from school. In some cases, students may need to take time off to support their families.
- **Safety Concerns:** Experiences of bullying, harassment, or safety concerns at school can deter students from attending. They may fear for their safety or well-being, leading to increased absenteeism.
- **Transportation Issues:** Difficulty in accessing transportation to school, especially in rural areas, can affect attendance. Lack of reliable transportation options can lead to sporadic attendance.
- **Socioeconomic Factors:** Families facing financial difficulties may struggle to provide necessary resources for their children to attend school regularly. Issues such as lack of appropriate clothing, food, or a stable home environment can contribute to absenteeism.

- **Special Educational Needs (SEND):** Students with special educational needs may require additional support and accommodations to attend school regularly.
- **Academic Challenges:** Students facing academic difficulties or feeling overwhelmed by coursework may avoid school. They may fear falling behind or failing in their studies.
- **Cultural and Language Barriers:** Children from diverse backgrounds may face challenges related to language barriers or cultural differences. These challenges can affect their attendance and engagement with school.
- **Peer Pressure and Social Factors:** Influence from peers can impact attendance. Children may avoid attending school to align with the behaviour of their peers or to engage in social activities outside of school.

To address any identified attendance issues effectively, The Earls High School will implement a range of strategies to improve attendance. If parents have any concerns they should contact the school as soon as possible.

3. Contact Details for attendance matters

- Attendance Champion - Mr J Toulson (info@earls.dudley.sch.uk)
- Attendance Officer - Mrs S Reynolds (attendance@earls.dudley.sch.uk)
- Attendance Officer – Mrs L Palmer (attendance@earls.dudley.sch.uk)
- Family Support Coordinator - Mr D Byrne (info@earls.dudley.sch.uk)
- Designated Safeguarding Lead - Mrs N Sevier (safeguarding@earls.dudley.sch.uk)
- Specific members of the Pastoral Team can be contacted through the school email address (info@earls.dudley.sch.uk) and message will be forwarded to the most appropriate person

4. 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 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](#)

5. Roles and Responsibilities

At The Earls High School, we believe that creating a culture of strong attendance is everyone's responsibility, and we implement the school's attendance culture and procedures by:

5.1 The Local Governing Body

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, including:

- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies
- 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

5.2. The Headteacher

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and authorising the Attendance Officers to do so
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing required information from the school register with the local authority

5.3. The Senior Leader responsible for Attendance (The Attendance Champion)

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Making effective use of absence data and maintaining oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Designing and implementing cohort-level interventions
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Carrying out quality assurance of attendance systems and processes across all roles
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed

- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families and report on their impact
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerabilities to develop specific support approaches for attendance, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where these pupils face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs

5.4. The Attendance Officers

- Checking all registers have been completed by 9.30am and 1.50pm
- Reporting to the Attendance Champion any inconsistency of register-taking by staff
- Completing the attendance register with the appropriate attendance codes
- Registering students arriving to school after 9:00am
- Following procedures for first-day absence
- Monitoring the attendance of individual students who are vulnerable or 'at risk' on a daily basis
- Allocating telephone calls to be made by pastoral and support staff on a daily basis
- Amending registers on receipt of authorisation of absence
- Alerting the Pastoral team of any case of suspected truancy, internal or external
- Tracking and analysing attendance data across the school for different groups and individuals
- Reporting attendance patterns to external agencies, Pastoral Team and Senior Leadership Team
- Working with external agencies to support good attendance
- Communicating with parents to discuss attendance issues and support them in improving their child's attendance
- Advising the Headteacher and Attendance Champion when to issue fixed penalty notices
- Liaising with the Headteacher on approving applications for holidays, attendance at public performances and other periods of absence during term time
- Meeting with students and families whose attendance is a concern and discuss the causes of their poor attendance, and develop plans to improve attendance
- Providing individual student support
- Conducting home visits

5.5. Key Stage Directors

- Promoting and recognising good attendance
- Monitoring and analysing patterns of attendance and punctuality of individuals, groups and the whole cohort, in particular vulnerable students, and working with the Attendance Champion and Attendance officers to address issues arising
- Following up any reported truancy or patterns of regular lateness, working with the Pastoral Team to contact the student's parents and issuing sanctions if necessary
- Supporting early intervention efforts by identifying children with attendance issues and implementing targeted interventions to reduce barriers
- Supporting vulnerable students including those with medical conditions, special educational needs, safeguarding concerns and other barriers to attendance
- Collaborating with designated safeguarding leads to address any child protection issues arising from attendance concerns

5.6. The Family Support Co-Ordinator

- Developing interventions for a small number of families in coordination with school leaders, Attendance and Pastoral teams and appropriate external agencies, to improve attendance
- Completing calls to parents of identified vulnerable students if they are absent

5.7. Pastoral Teams

- Making calls to parents of identified vulnerable students if they are absent
- Leading interventions and mentoring for individuals, as directed by the Attendance Champion

5.8. Form Tutors

- Recording attendance for morning sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office via Class Charts
- Promoting and recognising good attendance
- Setting clear expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms, including communicating the importance of regular attendance for learning and academic progress
- Engaging with attendance incentives and encouraging participation
- Noticing and reporting patterns of poor attendance or lateness, particularly for vulnerable students, which may include communicating with parents or the pastoral team
- Providing pastoral support to children who may be experiencing attendance challenges
- Conducting and logging supportive conversations with students returning from absence, passing on concerns to the Attendance, Pastoral and / or Safeguarding teams

5.9. Class Teachers

- Recording attendance for each lesson on a daily basis, using the correct codes (Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office digitally
- Taking immediate action when a child is absent without prior notification or a valid reason, by alerting on-call within the first ten minutes of the lessons
- Setting clear expectations for attendance and punctuality in their classrooms, including communicating the importance of regular attendance for learning and academic progress
- Creating a welcoming classroom environment where students feel motivated and engaged, particularly vulnerable students
- Being positive with students on their return to school and supporting them in catching up on work missed by absence, particularly during Do Now and Independent Practice tasks

5.10 Parents and Carers

- Making sure their child attends every day on time, establishing a daily routine that supports regular school attendance
- Contacting 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
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensuring that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside the school day
- Keeping to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and / or local authority
- Seeking support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Attendance team or their child's Head of Year (contact details above)
- Attending meetings with the school to discuss their child's attendance
- Engaging with support offered by the school

5.11 Students

- Attending school on time, every day
- Attending every timetabled lesson
- Signing in at the Attendance Office if arriving after 9am
- Signing out via Main Reception if leaving for a pre-arranged appointment
- Following the school's procedures if unwell

6. Recording Attendance

6.1. The 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

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 8.40am and ends at 2.55pm. Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.40pm and will be kept open until 2.10pm.

6.2. Unplanned Absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day and subsequent days of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible either via Class Charts, emailing attendance@earls.dudley.sch.uk or telephoning 01384 816108.

We will usually 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 4 days, where the number or pattern of absences is a cause for concern, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school may 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. The school reserves the right to authorise or not authorise attendance based on a holistic overview of the circumstances.

We will operate on a case-by-case basis when a student presents with complex medical or mental health needs, as we recognise that an individual approach may be needed. We will work closely with the student and their family to identify any necessary support.

6.3. Planned Absence

If a planned absence is unavoidable, the student's parent or carer must apply as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Section 7 outlines which term-time absences the school is able to authorise.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the student's parent

notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provides medical evidence. This can be done through Class Charts or by email to attendance@earls.dudley.sch.uk.

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

6.4. Lateness and punctuality

A student 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.

Lateness to school and to lessons is monitored by the Pastoral Team using Class Charts. Detentions may be issued for persistent lateness.

6.5. Internal absence (truancy)

Class teachers should contact on-call when a student who shows as being present in the previous lesson does not arrive to their lesson.

The school will monitor possible truancy from sessions or lessons. If it is proven to have occurred, appropriate sanctions will be applied, and contact will be made with the child's parents / carers.

6.6. Following up unexplained absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Send a text message to parents to inform them that their child is not in school, and request the reason for absence
- If there is no response, telephone to establish the reason for the absence. If contact cannot be made that day, we will telephone the emergency contacts we hold on file, and a home visit may be made by members of the Attendance and Pastoral teams
- Certain students considered to be vulnerable will be telephoned immediately when an absence has been identified, and visited at home if no response is received
- Where we have safeguarding concerns, refer to Social Services or West Midlands Police
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's Youth Offending Team Officer or Social Worker
- Once the reason for the absence has been determined, the Attendance Officer will identify whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised and record the correct code on the register no later than 5 working days after the absence
- Where appropriate (and always in the case of patterns of absence or multiple unexplained / unauthorised absences), offer support to the student and their family to improve attendance, and refer to external agencies as needed
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful or not engaged with, issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 9).

6.7. Reporting Attendance to Parents

Parents can see live attendance data for each session and lesson by logging in to Class Charts. They can also view the attendance history and statistics of their child through this platform.

Attendance will be reported in each of their child's Record of Achievement reports.

7. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

7.1. Approval of term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#).

These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad

- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as unavoidable, one-off events, for example bereavement or a housing crisis.

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

- Leave of absence will not be granted to take part in protest activity during school hours.
- As leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely to 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, via email to attendance@earls.dudley.sch.uk. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

7.2. Other valid reasons for authorised absence

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments
- 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)

7.3. Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

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

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

8. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

We communicate regularly with students and families, using the language of Attendance Bands:

Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5
100 – 95%	94.5 - 90%	89.5 – 85%	84.5 - 80%	Below 80%
Up to 9 days missed	Up to 19 days missed	Up to 29 days missed	Up to 39 days missed	More than 39 days missed
Up to 36 lessons missed	Up to 76 lessons missed	Up to 116 lessons missed	Up to 156 lessons missed	More than 156 missed

Every member of the school community must make attendance a high priority and communicate to students the importance of regular attendance. Students can monitor their own attendance using Class Charts. Good attendance is a requirement to achieve The Earls Gold Award.

The school uses a variety of ways to recognise good attendance, including:

- Achievement points for strong and improving attendance
- Inter-form competitions
- Rewards and incentives
- 100% attendance in a term letters and certificates
- 100% Attendance flash for 100% across a school year

We recognise that some young people have complex medical or SEND needs, or other vulnerabilities that affect their attendance for reasons beyond their control. We will recognise and celebrate their own individual achievements.

9. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, where each member of the school community feels valued and secure. Children are, however, sometimes reluctant to attend school. In these instances, the school and parents will work together to ensure that any barriers to attending school are removed.

All interventions by the school will be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of the student, we will follow a tiered approach (outlined below) to identify and support families when attendance becomes a concern.

10.1. Identifying students in need of support

Every week during term time the Attendance Champion will meet with each of the Key Stage Directors and Attendance Officers to look at emerging patterns of attendance. Students at risk of Persistent or Severe Absence will be identified and actions planned.

10.2. Early Intervention when attendance becomes a concern

When a student has accumulated 4 missed days in the school year, and there are no mitigating circumstances, we will write to parents to inform them that their child is at risk of becoming a Persistent Absentee.

10.3. Attendance support meeting

When a student has missed 8 days in the school year, their case will be discussed by the Attendance team, and parents will be informed and invited to an Attendance Support Meeting. This is an opportunity for the school to listen to the parents so that they understand the barriers to attendance. It is also an opportunity for the school and parents to make plans to work together to improve the attendance of their child. This may include:

- Short term timetable modifications or supplementary provision
- Peer support and mentoring
- Support from our Family Support Worker

- Referral to external agencies for more specialist support

10.4. Attendance contract

If the support offered is not effective or not engaged with, the school will work with the Local Authority to formalise the support offered. This could take the form of an Attendance Contract or Joint Early Warning Notice. Both have the aim of offering support as an alternative to prosecution.

10.5. Education supervision order

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

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution. It initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time. In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

10.6. Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

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

It will include:

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

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

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

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

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

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

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

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

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

11. Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

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

12. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Where students have been absent from school, our aim is for them to feel welcome and able to return as quickly as possible. We recognise that each student may face individual barriers to attendance, and where they arise, we will work hard to resolve them. We will meet with the student, parents or carers and any wider agencies working with the family to identify issues and plan appropriate support.

11.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Support could include:

Reviewing academic progress to ensure there is not an underlying SEND
Mental health support, NHS Reflexions, the school Counsellor or CAMHS
SEMH interventions such as soft-starts or ELSA programmes

A temporary reduced timetable

External support e.g. Early Help, Educational Psychologist, Inclusive Pathways, Phase Trust

The use of alternative provision

11.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health

Parents should consult the NHS guidance [Is my child too ill for school?](#) when deciding whether to keep their child home due to illness. We will share this guidance with parents, and provide support in understanding it, in order to promote school attendance wherever appropriate.

Following the advice of medical professionals, support could include all of the above, and / or:

Support from the School Nurse

Liaising with the local authority

Placement at Cherry Tree Learning Centre

Home tutoring through Muddle

Blended or remote learning via online learning platforms

11.3 Pupils absent due to other barriers to attendance

Students with additional vulnerabilities may face multiple other barriers to attendance, for example if they are disadvantaged, have SEND, are known (or were previously known) to social care or are young carers.

Our approach will always be to work closely with the student and their family to understand these barriers, and to plan individual programmes of support, with the aim of improving attendance to school as quickly as possible.

We will liaise with all key stakeholders, including:

The Local Authority and NPOC

Social workers

The Virtual School

The SENCO / local authority SEND teams, including requesting an emergency EHCP review

External support agencies

Where a pupil has an education health and care plan and their attendance falls, the school will inform the local authority.

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

Support could include:

A temporary reduced timetable / phased return

Additional catch-up tutoring

Blended or remote learning via online learning platforms

Adjustments to homework expectations

Mental health support, NHS Reflexions, the school Counsellor or CAMHS

SEMH interventions

External support e.g. Early Help, Educational Psychologist, Inclusive Pathways, Phase Trust

13. Attendance monitoring

12.1 Monitoring attendance

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

Attendance analysis will be an agenda item in SLT meetings each half-term.

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national, trust 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 compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board every half-term.

12.2 Analysing attendance data

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

12.2 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families
- Provide regular attendance reports to staff to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead)
- 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

14. GDPR

This policy adheres to the principles under Data Protection Law. For further information please review schools Data Protection policy published on school's website.

14. Related Policies

Other policies and documents to read alongside the attendance policy include:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy

15. Workload

A workload impact assessment has been carried out. Workload associated with the implementation of this policy will be kept under review throughout the year.

16. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Appendix 1: Attendance coding used by Department for Education 2024

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: • 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