Birkett House School

Pupil Attendance Policy

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Headteacher:	Tom Harrup
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Chair of Governors or Committee:	Tim Pearce

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance , 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 (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)
- https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contentsThe Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/regulation/2/madeIt 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
- 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, and/or authorising attendance champions to be able to do so
- 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 (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents 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 Cath Brooks who can be contacted via e-mail or school phone. They work alongside members of the school admin team to::

- 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 / attendance champion (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.5 Class Teachers / Form Tutors

Class teachers / form tutors 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 each morning.

3.6 School staff

School 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 pastoral lead or deputy head teacher where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Follow the absence protocol detailed in Appendix 2

3.7 Parents

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the deputy head or pastoral lead.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

3.9 Reporting to governors

The headteacher will provide the governing board with regular reports on attendance, including:

Termly reports including:

- Overall school attendance percentage
- Comparison with previous terms and the same period last year
- Persistent absence rates (pupils below 90% attendance)
- Severe absence rates (pupils below 50% attendance)
- Any emerging patterns or concerns
- Actions being taken to address attendance issues

Annual reports including:

- Full year attendance data and analysis
- Breakdown by year group and cohort
- Comparison with national and local authority data for special schools
- Impact of interventions and strategies implemented
- Attendance targets for the coming year
- Any recommendations for policy or practice changes

Ad-hoc reports:

- Governors will be informed immediately of any serious attendance concerns, including:
    - Pupils who may need to be reported as children missing education
    - Significant safeguarding concerns related to attendance
    - Any legal action being considered or taken

The governing board will use this information to challenge and support school leaders in maintaining high expectations for attendance while recognising the complex needs of our pupils.

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

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.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school staff, who can be contacted via telephone.

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 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 and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.2.1 Long-term medical conditions and complex health needs

As a special school, we recognise that many of our pupils have long-term medical conditions or complex health needs that may affect their attendance.

For pupils with long-term medical conditions:

- The school will work closely with parents, the school health team, and external medical professionals to understand the pupil's condition and how it affects their ability to attend school
- Where appropriate, an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) will be developed in collaboration with parents and healthcare professionals, setting out how the pupil's medical needs will be managed in school
- The IHP will include information about:
    - The pupil's medical condition and how it may affect attendance
    - Any medication or treatment required during the school day
    - Arrangements for managing periods of absence due to the condition
    - Emergency procedures
    - Staff training requirements

Part-time timetables for medical reasons:

- In some cases, a temporary part-time timetable may be appropriate for pupils with medical needs
- Part-time timetables will only be used as a short-term measure and will be regularly reviewed, unless there is evidence that a part-time timetable results in a level of higher attendance
- Any part-time timetable must be agreed by the headteacher, parents, and where appropriate, the pupil

- The arrangement will be documented, including:
    - The reason for the part-time timetable
    - The expected duration
    - The review date
    - How the pupil will access their full curriculum entitlement and what the curriculum priorities for that child are
- Part-time timetables will be recorded using the appropriate attendance code (C2) or (I)if it is recognised that they are too ill to attend on a full-time basis.

Medical evidence:

- For pupils with known long-term conditions documented in their EHCP or IHP, we will not routinely request medical evidence for each absence related to their condition
- However, if absence patterns change significantly or there are concerns, we may request updated medical information
- For new or undiagnosed conditions, we may request medical evidence as outlined in section 4.2

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, 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, unless due to exceptional circumstances or due to the medical needs of the pupil.
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

4.4.1 Transport-related absence and lateness

We recognise that many of our pupils rely on local authority-provided transport to attend school.

When transport is regularly missed or unavailable:

- The school will work with parents and the local authority transport team to identify and address barriers
- We will monitor patterns of transport-related absence and lateness
- Where transport issues are identified, the designated senior leader for attendance will:
    - Contact the parent to understand the reasons

- Liaise with the local authority transport team
- Consider whether additional support is needed for the family
- Review whether the transport arrangements remain suitable for the pupil's needs

Recording transport-related absence:

- Where transport is not available due to local authority failure, absence will be recorded using code Y1 (transport not available)
- Where transport is missed due to family circumstances, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence unless there are exceptional circumstances
- Persistent issues with transport will be escalated to the headteacher and local authority

Supporting pupils with transport difficulties:

- The school will work with the local authority to ensure transport arrangements meet pupils' needs, particularly where pupils have specific medical or behavioural needs
- Where transport issues are creating barriers to attendance, this will be addressed as part of the pupil's EHCP review

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 carry out a safe and well check.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below, as appropriate.

4.6 Children Missing Education (CME)

The school has a duty to report pupils who are missing from education to the local authority.

We will notify the local authority when:

- A pupil has been absent from school without authorisation for a continuous period of 10 school days or more

- A pupil has failed to attend school regularly (i.e., has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in the previous 6 months)
- The school and local authority have been unable to locate the pupil after making reasonable enquiries
- A pupil is removed from the school roll under specific circumstances as outlined in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Before reporting a pupil as CME, the school will:

- Make reasonable attempts to contact the parent/carer using all available contact details
- Contact any known emergency contacts
- Where appropriate and safe to do so, conduct a home visit or safe and well check
- Check with other agencies who may have contact with the family (e.g., social care, health services)
- Document all attempts to locate the pupil

The school will not remove a pupil from the school roll without notifying the local authority if:

- The pupil has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 20 school days, and
- The school and local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to locate the pupil

All CME referrals will be made in accordance with Leicestershire County Council's procedures for children missing education.

4.7 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 via termly reports

4.8 Elective Home Education (EHE)

Parents have the right to educate their child at home. However, as all pupils at Birkett House have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), there are additional considerations.

If a parent indicates they wish to electively home educate their child, the school will:

- Arrange a meeting with the parent to discuss their reasons and ensure they understand:
    - Their legal responsibilities for providing a suitable full-time education
    - The challenges of meeting the needs outlined in the EHCP at home
    - That the EHCP remains in place and the local authority will continue to review it
    - The process for returning to school if home education does not work out
    - That they will lose their child's school place
- Inform the local authority's SEND team immediately of the parent's intention

- Work with the local authority to ensure appropriate support and monitoring arrangements are in place
- Only remove the pupil from roll once written notification has been received from the parent and the local authority has been informed

The school will:

- Not seek to persuade parents against EHE, but will ensure they are making an informed decision
- Provide information about the support available through the local authority
- Ensure any safeguarding concerns are shared with appropriate agencies before the pupil leaves roll

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 an emergency that affects the parent or carer of the pupil being unable to bring the child to school or leave the pupil with a suitable carer.

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 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via our website. 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. Rewards for Attendance

Due to the nature of our pupils we do not feel it is appropriate to reward high levels of attendance as for many reasons including pupils medical needs, availability of transport, etc, they are unable to achieve this.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

An individual approach towards pupils with complex barriers to attendance is developed. This may sometimes involve staff providing some education for the pupil at home or providing activities that can be accessed at home.

7.2 Where a pupil has an education health & care (EHC) plan

Our students all have EHCPs. If their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that relates to the pupils needs, the school will inform 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

If a pupil has been absent from school over a long period of time we work with them on an individual basis to ensure an effective return that reflects the needs of the pupil.

8. Attendance monitoring

The school monitors attendance in a daily basis and systematically and regularly, at least monthly, analyses it.

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. This is reported to the school governors via the Quality Committee.

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

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so that 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 levels against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and 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
- 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

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

Birkett House 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 severe 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 governing board and school leaders
- 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.

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 benchmarks and intervention thresholds

School attendance target: Given the complex medical and special educational needs of our pupils, Birkett House aims for pupils to achieve 95% attendance or above where possible. This equates to missing no more than 9 days across the academic year.

However, we acknowledge that:

- Some pupils will have legitimate medical reasons for absence that are related to their diagnosed conditions and documented in their EHCP or Individual Healthcare Plan
- Each pupil's attendance will be considered individually, taking into account their specific needs and circumstances
- Our focus is on ensuring each pupil achieves the best attendance possible for them

Monitoring thresholds:

95% and above (up to 9 days absence):

- Attendance is monitored as part of routine data analysis
- Parents receive termly attendance updates
- Good attendance is acknowledged in communications with families

Between 90% and 94.9% (10-18 days absence):

- The designated senior leader for attendance will monitor these pupils
- Class teachers will be alerted to monitor attendance patterns
- The school may contact parents to:
    - Discuss any barriers to attendance

    - Offer support where appropriate
    - Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance
- Where absence is due to documented medical needs, this will be taken into account

Below 90% - Persistent Absence (more than 18 days absence):

- These pupils are considered persistently absent
- The designated senior leader for attendance will:
    - Meet with parents to discuss attendance and identify barriers
    - Develop an action plan with specific, measurable targets
    - Consider whether additional support is needed (e.g., from health services, social care, education welfare)
    - Monitor attendance weekly
- For pupils with EHCPs, the local authority will be informed
- Where absence is not related to documented medical needs and support is not engaged with, further action may be taken including notices to improve or penalty notices

Below 50% - Severe Absence:

- These pupils are considered severely absent
- Immediate action will be taken, including:
    - Urgent meeting with parents and senior leaders
    - Safeguarding review
    - Referral to education welfare officer
    - Notification to local authority SEND team
    - Consideration of whether the current placement remains appropriate
    - Multi-agency meeting where appropriate
- Legal intervention will be considered where absence is unauthorised and support is not engaged with

Important note: All decisions about interventions and sanctions will be made on an individual basis, taking full account of:

- The pupil's EHCP and identified needs
- Any documented medical conditions
- The family's engagement with support
- The school's duties under the Equality Act 2010

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the school leadership team. 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: • 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

Pupil Absence Protocol

Teachers/ Senior TA's collect registers from reception

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Any messages from parents to the office regarding (non)attendance are passed on immediately to class

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Collation of Registers back to the office by 9.30am

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Input Attendance on Sims

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Note 'BLANKS '(unexplained absences)

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Admin role to contact parents[1] when attendance blank

↓

No Answer

↓

Repeat call after 30 mins

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No Answer **Inform SLT**

↓

If reason provided **update register**[2]

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If unsure of reason **inform SLT**

[1] *When making calls to parents on work numbers be sensitive to what you tell receptionists, ie do not mention the school name, simply say you are ringing from, eg 'her son's school'.*

[2] *If absence is for acceptable reason update register and finish. Only input to Behaviourwatch if passed on to SLT as a concern. This ensures we have continuity of recording.*