



Loders CE Primary Academy

Attendance Policy

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| Senior Leader responsible for managing this policy | |
| Name: Claire Pooley | Position: Head of School |

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Statement of Intent

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Key Personnel

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Summary Practical Guidance for staff (including codes)
- Appendix 2 – Parent practical Guide
- Appendix 3 – Attendance improvement Plan template
- Appendix 4 - Attendance Flow Chart - Daily, weekly, half termly and termly
- Appendix 5 - Letter templates (DORSET, DEVON, PLYMOUTH)

1. Scope/Purpose of Policy

All First Federation Trust schools have the ambition that all pupils will strive for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellence for all pupils and will support them and families to attend school for every session and every day that school is open. It is vital that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Therefore, the school encourages parents of nursery and reception children who are not yet of compulsory school age to send their children to every session that is available to them. Every child enrolled at our school is expected to attend every day they are required to, on time, to support them in achieving their full potential. We monitor and manage attendance and punctuality across all year groups and expect parents to notify the school of any absence.

This policy applies to all trust and school leaders, governance, volunteers, staff, parents, and pupils.

- 1.1 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'teachers' include all paid staff responsible for the supervision of pupils.
- 1.2 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'pupils' include all learners in our school.
- 1.3 For the purposes of this policy, references to 'school' refers to all education settings, regardless of type.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this policy and the procedures, we refer to Section 576 of the Education Act which defines the 'parent' of a pupil or young person as:

Both of their natural parents, whether they are married or not.

Any person who, although they are not the natural parent, has parental responsibility for the pupil or young person, as defined in the Children Act (1989).

Any person who, although not the natural parent, has the care of the pupil or young person, i.e. a person with whom the pupil lives, irrespective of their relationship to the pupil.

2. DfE guidance and the Law

This policy is set out in regard to the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) Feb 2024 and refers to the

DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures (statutory from 19th August 2024) [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124422/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-19-august-2024.pdf). The policy also takes into account 'Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools' February 2023 [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124422/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-19-august-2024.pdf)

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

The Education Act (1996) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

The Education Act (2002) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents>

The Education and Inspections Act (2006)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (2006)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2010)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1725/contents/made>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2011)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1625/contents/made>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/contents/made>

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2016)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/contents/made>

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/757/contents/made>

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2024)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2024/210/made>

- 2.1 This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

- 2.2 By law, all schools must keep an admissions' register, the contents of which includes all pupils, their personal details, (including at least two telephone numbers for different safe adults, to ensure that we can always contact someone in the event of an emergency), the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and details of the school last attended.
- 2.3 Pupils will be removed from roll only when they complete their education stage, transfer to another school, move out of the area or emigrate or following a parental request for elective home education. We follow statutory guidance for removing pupils from roll and notifying the local authority. Further information can be found in Appendix 1 – Practical information for staff.
- 2.4 There is a clear link between attainment and attendance. Under **section 444 (1)** of the **Education Act 1996** (EA 1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school where the child is registered. We therefore enforce the use of statutory action to encourage and promote attendance, this is done to ensure that all pupils can benefit from their legal right to receive an education.
- 2.5 Schools will communicate attendance concerns to the pupil's social worker, if they have one or The Virtual School Head, if the pupil is a looked after child. This will be done as soon as there is an attendance concern and immediately upon becoming a persistent absentee. Unexplained absences will also be communicated to the social worker and Virtual School Head, where relevant.
- 2.6 We have roles and responsibilities outlined below with a clear framework outlined in Appendix 2 (summary practical information for parents) and Appendix 1 (summary practical information for staff) complement this policy. These define agreed roles and responsibilities for parents, pupils, and staff. This includes the new responsibility for our School Attendance Champion who is Claire Pooley, Head of School.

3. Role and Responsibilities

Improving attendance is everyone's business. All stakeholders have a collective responsibility to promote, manage and improve attendance across their school community.

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, therefore, Lodders CE Primary Academy expects everyone to uphold their responsibilities for promoting attendance at school.

To do this everyone must understand their role in promoting a positive culture of attendance and be clear about what is required of them individually as well as how they need to work together in partnership with others.

To support this policy, we follow the DfE statutory guidance 'Working together to Improve School Attendance'.

Expect

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school

Monitor

Rigourously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

3.1

Listen and Understand

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

Facilitate Support

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

Formalise Support

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.

Enforce

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention; a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Flow chart from "Working together to improve school attendance" (effective from 19 August 2024)

3.2 Trust Leaders will:

- develop and foster a positive culture around the importance of good attendance.
- ensure all schools adopt and comply with the expectations set out within this policy and fulfil their statutory duties around attendance.
- ensure all staff have the relevant training and support to undertake their roles and responsibilities for attendance.
- foster an inclusive culture in all schools with a clear sense of belonging for all pupils in all schools across the trust.
- monitor the effectiveness and impact of the policy with regular tracking and monitoring.
- share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- ensure governance volunteers receive information about a breadth of attendance matters across the trust
- work with the trust attendance officer to monitor and support schools, staff and the wider community in raising and maintaining good attendance for all.

3.3 Heads of School and or The Attendance Champion and DSL should:

- adopt and implement the attendance policy within their school.
- set high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents.
- identify a senior attendance champion from their school leadership team.
- promote the importance of good attendance with all stakeholders.
- keep a daily attendance register in line with the legal framework from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed or has been notified that the pupil will attend the school.
- ensure all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the policy and regularly monitor the implementation.
- monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families including analysis and review of any part time timetables.
- use analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and to leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and the family support advisor).
- undertake frequent individual level analysis to identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for individual cases.
- strive to support families and children where there are barriers to overcome to achieve good attendance.
- foster an inclusive culture and sense of belonging for all pupils.
- ensure due regard, support and relevant reasonable adjustments are in place for pupils with SEND where attendance is a barrier.

- hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) consider to be vulnerable or are persistently or severely absent to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- identify pupils who need support from wider partners as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals.
- inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school.
- Be mindful of guidance around mental health issues effecting attendance as outlined in [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/108222/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupil-s-attendance-guidance-for-schools.pdf) February 2023 they will seek to work alongside pupils, families and wider professionals to co-ordinate and support with any relevant pastoral care and make reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the equality Act 2010.

3.4 **School Office Staff should:**

- monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- ensure any first day call is undertaken to follow up any unexplained pupil absences.
- report concerns about attendance to the headteacher/attendance lead/ Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- arranges calls, home visits and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- liaise with any alternative providers to ensure daily attendance checks are complete.
- co-ordinate requests for Term-time Leave of Absence (this includes liaison with the attendance/DSL leads and Safeguarding Team) and advises the head of school as requested.
- support the attendance champion to co-ordinate attendance improvement plans.

3.5 **Teachers and wider school staff should:**

- raise pupils' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality,
- ensure attendance has a high profile within the class and foster a sense of belonging for all pupils.
- work in partnership with parents and carers, including regularly informing them about their child's absence and attendance levels.
- work with external agencies where required, such as health, the Local Authority and local organisations to support our pupils, parents and school
- consider whether a pupils known, or not yet identified, SEN could be impacting on attendance and whether provision and/or further reasonable adjustments should be made

- take registers for morning and afternoon sessions within the timeframe set out in the School Attendance Policy.
- support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge learning gaps
- celebrate good and/or improved attendance and punctuality
- work in partnership with parents to support them in performing their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly in line with the law (parents/ legal guardians have the prime responsibility for ensuring that pupils of compulsory school age attend regularly. (Section 576, Education Act 1996)
- escalate concerns as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

3.6 Where a school has a Family Support Advisor (FSA) they will work with the SENDCo to:

- support the attendance champion, wider school leaders, the office staff and teachers in raising the importance of attendance especially for the most vulnerable pupils
- support families to identify barriers and any support needed to improve attendance including any aspects around SEND that are a barrier to school attendance including medical needs
- liaise with and signpost to wider agencies that will support families and pupils to improve their attendance.

3.7 Pupils should:

- attend school every day and every timetabled lesson punctually
- acknowledge positive behaviours needed both inside and outside of our school
- adhere to our systems for late registration
- adhere to attendance contracts if they are in place
- aim for the highest possible attendance
- discuss concerns about their attendance or punctuality with a trusted adult in our school, especially if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance and/or learning
- attend all lessons ready to learn with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for their class

3.8 Parents and carers should:

- ensure pupils attend regularly and punctually.

- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- ensure that their children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as by making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- work with the school and their child to address any in-school barriers to attendance and support their learning by taking an interest in what they have been doing at school.
- enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that their child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that children receive the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance.
- provide the school with more than one emergency contact for their child.
- provide proof of medical appointments that can only be attended during the school day.
- make early contact with the school when they become aware of problems with their child attending school.
- attend meetings if concerns are identified.
- participate in Early Help Meetings if required.
- support attendance contracts where appropriate.
- support the school in actioning agreed interventions/action plans
- must inform the school office on the first day of their child's absence

3.9 As set out in the DfE guidance the Local Authority (LA) are expected to:

- rigorously track local attendance data to devise a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises the pupils, pupil cohorts and schools on which to provide support and focus its efforts on to unblock area wide barriers to attendance.
- have a School Attendance Support Team which provides the following core functions free of charge to all schools (regardless of type).
- communication and advice: regularly bring schools together to communicate messages, provide advice and share best practice between schools and trusts within the area.
- targeting Support Meetings: hold regular conversations with schools, using their attendance data to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and access to services for those pupils.

- multi-disciplinary support for families: provide access to early help support workers to work intensively with families to provide practical whole-family support where needed to tackle the causes of absenteeism and unblock the barriers to attendance.
- legal intervention: take forward attendance legal intervention (using the full range of parental responsibility measures) where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with.
- monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker through their Virtual School

4. Definitions

- 4.1 A pupil is classed as **absent** if they arrive after the register has closed or if they do not attend for any reason.
- 4.2 An **authorised absence** is when approval has been given in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent for a specific (legal) purpose, or we have accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence from a parent or carer. This may include:

An absence for illness

- The NHS has produced a helpful guide for parents regarding childhood illness and school: [Is my child too ill for school?](https://www.nhs.uk) - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
- In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by parents/carers following the school's absence reporting procedures unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. The school follows the Department for Education guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' 2024 which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.
- In some exceptional circumstances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the pupil's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual pupil.
- Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require appropriate medical evidence in order to best support the child or young person and to be able to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.
- Absences due to illness which have not been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.
- Our school supports pupil mental health and wellbeing following the DfE guidance Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's Attendance/Designated Safeguarding Lead (or other key professional in the setting) for further information on the support available.

Medical or dental appointments

- These may be granted leave where every attempt has been made to arrange outside of school hours, has been unsuccessful and so cannot be avoided, or where the appointment is a genuine emergency.
- Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter and only then will the absence be authorised.

Religious or cultural observances

- The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents or pupil belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Traveller Absence

- The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.
- This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary.
- Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible.
- Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

An absence which is now deemed to be due to exceptional circumstances

- We take advice about these as outlined in the DfE statutory guidance.
- The school will review each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- Any leave of absence that is granted, the school will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school.
- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head of School's discretion taking into account a wide range of evidence

4.3 An **unauthorised absence** is defined as one where we are not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Reasons may include:

missing sessions before or during the school day
parents keeping children from attending unnecessarily or without reason
absences which have never been properly explained
pupils who arrive at school late after the register has closed
day trips and holidays and long weekends in term time that have not been agreed
if a pupil has been kept away from school longer than the school agreed, the additional absence will be unauthorised.
leaving our school without authorisation during the day

Unauthorised absences may result in legal sanctions, use of penalty notices or prosecution.

4.4 **Persistent Absence (PA)** is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

4.5 **Severe Absence (SA)** is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

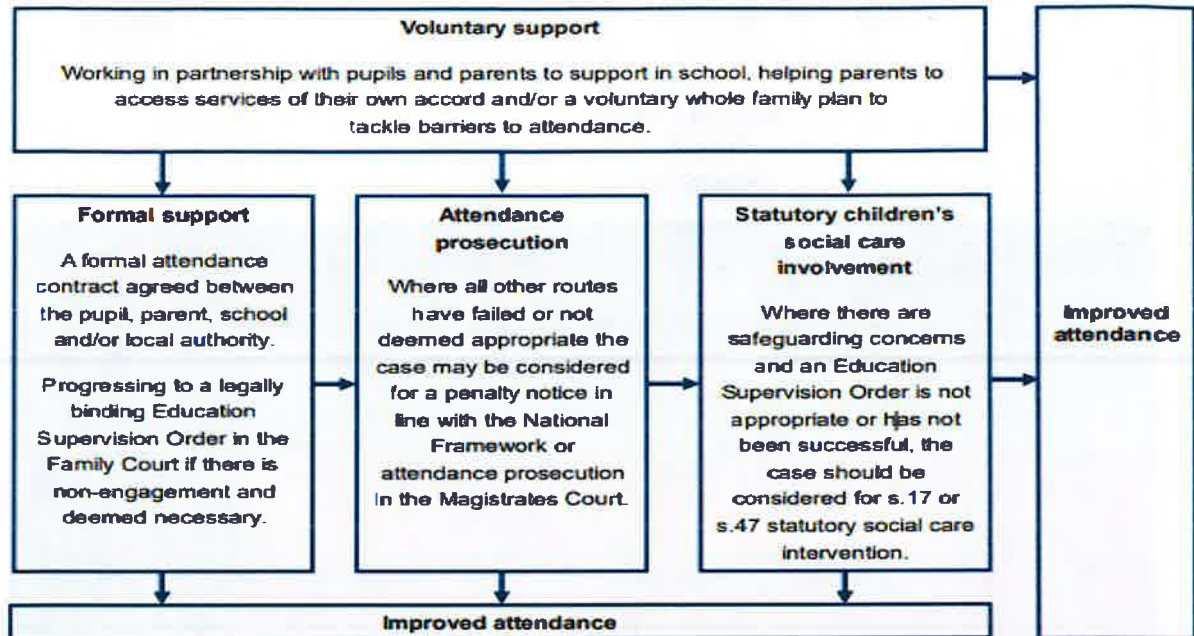
4.6 **Persistent lateness** is defined as pupils who have five or more late marks recorded in a single half-term.

| Attendance Visual | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|---|--------|----------------------|---|
| Attendance % | Days Lost | Sessions Missed (each school day has 2 sessions) | Rating | Ratings | Educational impact |
| 100% | 0 Days | 0 Sessions | | Excellent | Data from 2019 shows that 84% of Key Stage 2 pupils who had 100% attendance achieved the expected standard compared to 40% of pupils who were persistently absent across the key stage. |
| 97% | 1 Week | 10 Sessions | | Good | |
| 94% | 2 Weeks | 20 Sessions | | Satisfactory | |
| 90% | 4 weeks | 40 Sessions | PA | Concerning | |
| 85% | 6 Weeks | 60 Sessions | | Extremely Concerning | |
| 80% | 8 Weeks | 80 Sessions | | Maximum Concerns | |
| 50% | 19 Weeks | 190 Sessions | SA | | |

5. Attendance Support and Legal Intervention

The school, the trust and local authority will work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on penalty notices or prosecution. Our focus will be on using all strategies to support and promote good attendance prior to formal intervention.

Providing support first before attendance legal intervention



5.1

5.2 **A Formal Attendance Contract** is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. An attendance contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. This can be in place for between 3 and 12 months if the pupil's irregular attendance continues or escalates to the point where prosecution is deemed appropriate.

5.3 **Education supervision order:** this is where a voluntary early help plan, or attendance contract has not been successful.

5.4 **Penalty notice:** A penalty notice must be issued in line with the National Framework and local code of conduct for the area in which the child goes to school, and if issued by a local authority, it must be the school Local Authority.

5.5 **The National Framework for Penalty Notices (as of 19th August 2024)**

The national framework for penalty notices is to help tackle inconsistencies in their use. The fine to parents must be considered if a child misses 5 days of school for unauthorised absence. Alongside this, costs for fines will go up.

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £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 issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
- Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school.
- A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence (for example an unauthorised holiday in term time). These will be issued in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

- All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice.
- The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session.

This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence.

For example;

- 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks
 - 10 sessions of holiday in one week
 - 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks
 - The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years.
- 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 fixed period or permanent exclusion.
 - The school must have notified the parents of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place. This type of penalty notice is not included in the National Framework and therefore not subject to the same considerations about support being provided or count towards the limit as part of the escalation process in the case of repeat offences for non-attendance.

ATTENDANCE WHAT THE NEW RULES MEAN FOR ME

1 I'm a single parent of one child and we want to go on holiday for a week.

Your holiday will not be authorised and you must talk to the school before you book anything. Because your child will miss 5 school days you will be given a penalty notice fine. The fine is £160 but if you pay it in 21 days it will be reduced to £80.

£160



2 FOR EVERY CHILD A PENALTY IS GIVEN.

IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE

10 IN 10

5

If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks and their absences are unauthorised. The school will consider prosecution.

1 Day = **2** Sessions



+ £160 + £160 + £160 + £160
4 children & 1 parent = £640
 Reduced to £320 if paid in 21 days

3 FOR A FAMILY OF TWO PARENTS

+ £160 + £160 + £160 + £160

4 children & 2 parents = £1280

Reduced to £640 if paid in 21 days



If in any period of not more than 3 years, your child has a 2nd and 3rd leave of absence or pattern of irregular attendance...

4

2ND TIME

2 parents and 1 child = £320
 2 children = 640
 3 children = 960
 4 children = 1280

No discount for early payment



3RD TIME

A penalty notice fine will not be given. Instead, your case will be taken to court.
 A magistrate can fine each parent £2500 for each child
1 parent & 4 children = £10,000
2 parents & 4 children = £20,000

5.6 **Attendance Prosecution:** Either Local Authority (Devon, Dorset or Plymouth) has the power to prosecute, but in general it should be the school LA that takes forward prosecutions under section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996. It is, however, good practice for the school LA to inform the Home LA that legal action is being taken.

5.7 **Parenting orders:** Where a prosecution leads to a Parenting Order, the Court will specify a responsible officer in line with section 372(5) of the Sentencing Act 2020. Both local authorities should discuss and agree who is most appropriate to act as responsible officer in advance of seeking the Order, within the statutory requirements. The most appropriate officer will often depend on the reason for absence.

5.8 **School Attendance Orders:** A School Attendance Order is issued if the local authority thinks your child is not getting an education. Parents have 15 days to provide evidence that they have registered their child with the school listed in the order or that you're giving them home education. If parents do not, they could be prosecuted or given a fine.

6. Monitoring and Reviewing Attendance

6.1 We recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the year. Specific measures are taken to monitor attendance daily, weekly and termly. These processes are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the effective safeguarding of all pupils through specific tailored interventions.

Patterns of absence

Patterns of lateness

Patterns of medical appointments

Correct and consistent use of absence codes

Trends in reasons for absence, for example, use of the C code, leave of absence and exclusions.

Trends in particular groups of children for example, pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

6.2 We recognise that certain groups of pupils may be more at risk of poor attendance and will provide support and assistance. We will support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support pupils and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily.

6.3 Wherever possible, we will work collaboratively to find strategies to overcome barriers. Where this is a formalised approach we will work in conjunction with the local authority and take the relevant action as outlined by the DfE statutory

guidance [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

- 6.4 In line with DfE expectations **reduced timetables** will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period, to support pupils to reintegrate back into education and access full time provision.
- 6.5 The school is committed to share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and external partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- 6.6 As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school has made all reasonable enquiries and cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare and safety.
- 6.7 We set challenging attendance targets for the whole school and trust as we believe that good attendance is vital to ensure pupils are fully prepared for their next steps and have every chance of reaching their true potential.
- 6.8 Pupil-level absence data is collected regularly and published at national and local authority level through the DfEs school absence national statistics releases. We compare our attendance data to the national average.
- 6.9 Attendance data informs action planning and supports the identification of key priorities in our school development plan and future revisions of this policy. The attendance data will be reported to the Head of School and all other relevant staff, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families. Data will also be used by the school to monitor the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies.

7. **Reviewing this Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the following circumstances:

Changes in legislation and/or government guidance

**As a result of any other significant change or event
If the policy is determined not to be effective**

Pupil attendance policy
Appendix 1
Practical information for staff

Maintaining an Attendance Register

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the pm session. It will mark whether each 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 making the amendment

The school gates are open from: 8:35pm. The school day starts at 9am. All pupils should be in their classroom at this time.

The first (morning) registration session starts at 8.50am. Pupils will receive a late mark they are not in their designated classroom by 9.00am. The register closes at 9.30am Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend before this time. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that the pupil is on site, (U) but will count as an absent mark.

Pupils arriving late should report to the main school office.

The second (afternoon) registration session start at 1.00pm.

If a pupil needs to leave school during the day, they must sign out at the main reception with a parent once authorisation has been given from the school office.

Pupils educated off-site are monitored daily for their attendance at the off

site/alternative provision. Staff work closely with the staff at the off-site provision, the pupil, and their parents to support the pupil to maintain good attendance.

Recording Attendance

The national absence and attendance codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting attendance data daily and sharing with the DfE and the Local Authority. The data helps schools, local authorities, and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for absence.

There should be no pre-population of codes and individual school tracking systems which monitor the whereabouts of pupils educated off-site, must be robust and quality assured regularly.

Where pupils are dual registered, are on voluntary service or are taking part in other approved educational activities, the register will be updated following regular discussion and information sharing with the other establishment.

The school administrator (Katalin Seprenyi-Batten) will check the missing register report throughout the day and report any registers that have not been completed.

Reporting Absence

It is the responsibility of the parent to inform us of a pupil absence and to inform us of any changes to contact details.

Parents are expected to inform us of their pupil's absence before 9.00 a.m. on each day of absence providing the reason for absence and when their pupil will be returning to school. We will contact parents and/or other listed emergency contacts where no contact has been made. Where required, we may conduct reasonable enquiries with friends or neighbours and may carry out welfare home visits. Schools should carry out a home visit and see the child on or before the 3rd school day of absence. If no contact is made, we may request a welfare check from the police.

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and

employment where requested in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with.

- Study leave: for public examinations, as agreed in advance with a parent the pupil normally lives with. Please note this does not include any internal examinations such as mocks as study leave should not be granted in such cases.
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable: where the pupil is of compulsory school age, both the parent who the pupil normally lives with and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons and have agreed the times and dates when the pupil will be expected to attend school as part of that timetable.
- Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Absence for purposes of leave during term time can only be authorised by the Head of School, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations (2024). "Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional." Under the Regulations, retrospective authorisation for leave in exceptional circumstances is not permitted.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional circumstances' are that they are: 'rare; significant; unavoidable and short'. Holidays during term time will not usually be considered as exceptional circumstances. The following guiding principles apply:

- Term-times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off a year including weekends and school holidays. We will rightly prioritise attendance.
- The decision to authorise a pupil's absence is wholly at the Head of School's discretion based on their assessment and merits of each individual request.

- If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term-time, then it would be normal to authorise absence for such an event – holidays are therefore not considered ‘exceptional circumstances’.
- It is acceptable for the Head of School to take a pupil’s record of attendance into account when making absence-related decisions.
- We will take the needs of the families of service personnel into account if this prevents them from being able to take family holidays during scheduled holiday time.
- We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities.

The following might be considered as exceptional circumstance:

- Religious festivals: the school should authorise any absence where the parent/carer’s religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival. For example: There are two key festivals in Islam, Eid-ul-Fitr (celebration that takes place at the end of Ramadan, the period of fasting) and Eid-ul-Adha (festival of sacrifice). The dates of these key events are set according to the Islamic calendar. Muslim families usually need to take one or two days to celebrate these important festivals.
- Religious rites e.g. Bar Mitzvah, Holy Communion. The Head of School will consider each request for leave of absence individually to determine the number of days approved.
- Illness or death of an immediate family member; the head teacher should consider time needed for the length of journey when child needs to travel abroad.
- Child, parent/carer requires medical treatment overseas or elsewhere in the UK due to language barrier or requiring specialist treatment elsewhere.
- Length of journey from abroad; the Head of School will consider length of journey or limited regional flights.
- Cultural celebrations such as Chinese New Year or Diwali. Cultural celebrations give children a feeling of belonging and make them feel part of their culture. This sense of identity is like a natural buoy for a child’s emotional health.
- Children attending their annual exam in their home country. There are exams which are compulsory in some EU countries. They are normally during holidays but can occasionally be requested during term time.
- Child, parent/ carer’s visa have been revoked and they need to return to their birth country whilst pursuing the renewal of a visa.

Family emergencies need careful consideration before decisions about attendance are made. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the pupil to miss education

for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with stability. The school routine can offer a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty. Relevant members of staff will work with parents to decide what is in the best interest of the pupil.

Persistent and Severe Absence

Pupils with 90% or less attendance are classified as Persistent Absence (PA). PA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences.

Pupils with 50% or less attendance are classified as Severe Absence (SA). SA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences

Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches.

Particular focus should be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. A concerted effort is therefore needed across all relevant services to prioritise them. All partners should work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. Schools and local authorities should be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues in these cases and where these remain, conduct a full children's social care assessment. Further information is available in the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In all cases, schools and local authorities are expected to make patterns of both persistent and severe absence a focus of their regular data monitoring and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible. Both persistent and severe absence should also be central to school, trust, and local authority level strategies for improving attendance.

Following Up Absence and Taking Statutory Action

We will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason. Any pupils who fail to attend regularly or who are absent for more than one day without reason will be referred to the Head of School.

Unexplained absences will be followed up on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence and the school will identify whether the absence is approved or not. The school will identify the correct code to use and will input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained. In exceptional circumstances this will take no longer than 5 working days after the session.

In the case where the reason for absence cannot be ascertained by the school and no reason has been issued for the pupil's absence, the school will initiate safeguarding procedures and the DSL will decide on the best course of action to ensure the safety of the pupil, following procedures for children missing in education as outlined in the document from the Department of Education.

Where it is appropriate, a member of staff may carry out a 'Return to School Interview' to discuss the absence and to offer any support. Following three separate periods of absence the interview will be carried out by a senior member of staff.

It may occasionally be necessary to inform parents that no further absences will be authorised for a particular pupil unless medical evidence is provided. This decision can only be made by the Head of School in consultation with, where relevant, the SENDCO.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send children to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence. Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their pupil, where the pupil is of compulsory school age. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head of School, in line with the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may consider:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

- Singular incidences of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is seen in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

The local authority's code of conduct can be found here (please delete as appropriate to retain the information from your LA):

Devon: [School attendance and legal proceedings – Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

Dorset: [School attendance and absence - Dorset Council](#)

Plymouth: [Penalty notices for absence from school | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)

Issuing Penalty Notices: A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, from autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £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 issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Taking Parents to Court for unauthorised absence: If parents are prosecuted and attend court because their child hasn't been attending school, they could get a fine of up to £2,500

Unauthorised Absence: All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. Schools should not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices and should make judgements on each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency across the country. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week

means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

Children Missing from Education (CME)

We have due regard to our statutory duty to safeguard pupils who are CME. We follow the Local Authority's processes for reporting pupils missing from education. [The DfE guide can be found here.](#)

If a pupil fails to return following a period of absence, investigations will be made by staff to their whereabouts. If our investigations fail to contact the parents/pupil the case will be referred to the Local Authority Children Missing Education (CME) Team where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days

Attendance Causing Concern

Specific measures to monitor attendance are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the safeguarding of all pupils through specific and tailored interventions.

Loders CE Primary Academy records and collects attendance data using our Data Management System, ScholarPack. We recognise that there are particular groups who nationally, and within our local setting, are more vulnerable and susceptible to lower attendance patterns such as children who are defined as Pupil Premium, and pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities. We work with families to overcome any specific barriers that children may be facing regardless of these needs to ensure that pupils access all their education.

The school reports to parents on their child's attendance via the annual report to parents.

Where attendance is deemed to be a concern, we talk to pupils and parents. From this, there may be one of three Early Help outcomes:

- Initiate simple reasonable adjustments
- Develop a school focused plan with the pupil and their parent as appropriate
- Initiate a multi-agency Early Help Assessment (EHA)

If the conversation with the pupil indicates a serious safeguarding concern, we will follow our safeguarding procedures as set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Supporting the Attendance of Every Pupil

We use a variety of strategies to encourage attendance:

- Building strong and enduring relationships with our pupils so they feel a sense of belonging in our school community
- Verbal encouragement and praise
- Create personalised and achievable targets for pupils, based on their medical needs and/or additional needs that is realistic and appropriate for each individual
- Create safe spaces for pupils to thrive
- Make decisions on targets in consultation with families, while understanding that a medical condition can worsen suddenly and taking this into account.
- Create opportunities for dialogue with families about attendance, ensuring that we work in partnership with parents
- Use different methods to encourage attendance; for instance, explaining the links between attendance and outcomes
- Raise the profile of attendance with families, particularly when pupils start at the setting
- Teach and model a love of learning, helping families to see the value of the education that is offered to them
- Look at the effect on attendance of decisions made at school level, for instance ending terms on a Monday or Tuesday
- Be aware of the complexity of different contexts and the pressures that families might experience, which may in turn contribute to poor attendance; for instance, in areas where many parents perform seasonal work and are unable to take holidays over the summer break.

We recognise that not all children, particularly those who are most vulnerable, are able to achieve 100% attendance through no fault of their own. We celebrate improvements in attendance and contextualised good attendance for individual pupils.



Each pupil is supported and encouraged to achieve their individual highest possible attendance. Pupil's will be provided with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time bound) individual targets for their attendance which should be reviewed regularly and include parental consultation where appropriate. Attendance effort awards will be awarded on a termly basis for pupils who have made a clear effort to improve or maintain their attendance and/or punctuality.

Attendance Codes

| Attending the school | |
|---|---|
| / \ | Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session |
| L | Late arrival before the register is closed |
| K | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority |
| V | Attending an educational visit or trip |
| P | Participating in a sporting activity |
| W | Attending work experience |
| B | Attending any other approved educational activity |
| D | Dual registered at another school |
| Absent – Authorised reasons | |
| T | Parent travelling for occupational purposes |
| R | Religious observance |
| I | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) |
| E | Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made |
| C1 | Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad. |
| M | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment |
| J1 | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution |
| S | Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination |
| X | Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school |
| C2 | Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable |
| C | Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance |
| Absent - Unauthorised absence | |
| G | Holiday not granted by the school |
| N | Reason for absence not yet established |
| O | Absent in other or unknown circumstances |
| U | Arrived in school after registration closed |
| Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes | |
| Q | Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements |
| Y1 | Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available |
| Y2 | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel |
| Y3 | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed |
| Y4 | Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed |
| Y5 | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention |
| Y6 | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law |
| Y7 | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause |

| Administrative Codes | |
|----------------------|---|
| Z | Prospective pupil not on admission register |
| # | Planned whole school closure |

Attendance codes

Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session

Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration, they will still be counted as attending for statistical purposes.

Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed

The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register is closed. Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes. If a pupil is marked N but arrives later in the session after the register has closed, the attendance register must be amended to mark them as absent using code U or another absence code that is more appropriate.

Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead.

Schools must also record the nature of the provision (regulation 10(5)), examples are:

- attending courses at college.
- attending unregistered alternative provision such as, home tutoring.

Schools should ensure that the arrangements are in place whereby the provider notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip

The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational visit or trip arranged by or on behalf of the

school and supervised by a member of school staff. The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

If the pupil does not attend the visit or trip the school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code P: Participating in a sporting activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity. The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;

the activity is of an educational nature;

the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.

If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity, they can seek advice from the sports' national governing body. The final decision on approving the activity, however, rests with the school and they should take the effect on the pupil's general education into account.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the sporting activity notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code W: Attending work experience

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience provided under arrangements made by a local authority or the school as part of the pupil's education. The work experience must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;

the activity is of an educational nature;

the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the work experience notifies the school of any absence by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity

The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience. The educational activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

A pupil can only be recorded as attending a place for an approved educational activity if:

the place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014;

the activity is of an educational nature;

the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.

Attending taster days at other schools;

- attending courses at college.
- attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school.

Schools have responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils attending an approved educational activity. The school will need to be satisfied that appropriate

measures have been taken to safeguard the pupil. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the educational activity notifies the school of any absences by the pupil. The school must record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

As set out in the DfE's guidance on '[Providing remote education](#)'. Pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the most appropriate absence code. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register.

Code D: Dual registered at another school

The law allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.

The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up.

Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

Schools should not unnecessarily ask for proof that the parent is travelling for occupational purposes, this should only happen when there are genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt over the reason given, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence.

To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Whilst for statistical purposes this is counted as authorised absence, if a pupil's attendance was to fall below an acceptable level consideration may be given to attendance enforcement.

Defence in the law

Parents can in some circumstances, present a defence against prosecution, under section 444(6) of the Education Act 1996. This defence applies where the child has no fixed abode, and the parent can prove that they are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place and that the child has been attending school as regularly as the trade or business permits. If the child is aged 6 or older, the parent must also prove that the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months. This is in addition to the requirement to prove that the child has attended as regularly as the trade or business permits, which means that if the trade or business permits the child to attend for more than 200, they should do so.

Code R: Religious observance

The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves).

As a general rule, 'a day exclusively set apart for religious observance' is a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion. If in doubt, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

If a religious body sets apart a single day for a religious observance and the parent applies for more than one day, the school may only record one day using this code; the rest of the time would need a leave of absence, and this is granted at the school's discretion as set out under Code C.

Schools and local authorities may seek to the adverse effects of religious observance on a pupil's attendance and attainment by considering approaches such as:

Setting term dates around days for religious observance;

Working with local faith groups to develop guidance on absence for religious observance;

Taking INSET days that coincide with religious observance days; and providing individual support for pupils who miss sessions on days exclusively set apart for religious observance.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)

The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.

Schools are not expected to routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness absences. Schools should only request reasonable medical evidence in cases where they need clarification to accurately record absence in the attendance register – i.e. making a decision that code I is the absence code that accurately describes the reason the pupil is not in school for the session in question. In the majority of cases a parent's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern. Only where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence.

Where medical evidence is deemed necessary, school should not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and should speak to the family about what evidence is available. Schools should be mindful that requesting additional medical evidence unnecessarily places pressure on health professionals, their staff and their appointment system, particularly if the illness is one that does not require treatment by a health professional. Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, schools should take this into account. Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence the school should have a conversation with the parent and pupil, if appropriate, which may in itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education.

When a pupil of compulsory school age is suspended or permanently excluded on disciplinary grounds from a maintained school, pupil referral unit, academy, city technology college, or city college for the technology of the arts, alternative provision must be arranged from the sixth consecutive school day of any suspension or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made for the session in question and the pupil is attending it, schools should record this using the appropriate attendance code in regulation 10(3) Table 2 or if the pupil is attending another school at which they are a registered pupil, schools should record this using code D (dual registered at another school).

Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.

All schools can grant leaves of absence for pupils to undertake employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours. Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only do so in the following circumstances (under regulation 11(2)):

Where the local authority have granted a licence for the pupil to take part in a performance regulated by section 37(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963.

Where a pupil does not need a licence for such a performance because an exception applies under section 37(3) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, including where a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) covering the pupil has been issued by the local authority in whose area the performance will take place or the Secretary of State.

Where a Justice of the Peace has given the pupil a licence to go abroad for a performance or other regulated purpose under section 25(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

Schools should be sympathetic to requests for leave of absence that are supported by a licence issued by a local authority or a BOPA; as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a pupil's education. Where a local authority licence specifies the dates that a pupil is to be away from school to perform, the school should record the absence for those days as if a leave of absence had been applied for and granted. Where the terms of the local authority licence do not specify dates, however, or where a BOPA or other exemption or licence from a Justice of the Peace applies, it is at the discretion of the school to grant leave of absence.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a pupil who is absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or work abroad under a licence or exemption as described above. 320. This code is classified for statistical purposes as 19ocused19d19 absence.

Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment

Schools should encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, they should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant leave of absence for this under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence), and the school is

satisfied that, based on the individual facts of the case, there are exceptional circumstances which justify the leave.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment.

If a pupil is present at registration but then leaves the school to attend a medical or dental appointment during the session in question, no absence needs be recorded for that session.

Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(4), where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence) and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record a leave of absence has been granted for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational establishment.

This interview must take place during the session for which it is recorded.

Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant leave of absence, under regulation 11(5), for a pupil to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Study leave should not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete and should be used sparingly. If schools do decide to grant study leave, provision must still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave that has been granted for the purpose of studying for a public examination.

Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(7) or (8) for a pupil not of compulsory school age to attend school part-time.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because their timetable does not require them to attend.

Where the pupil is absent when timetabled to attend the school, the absence must be recorded using the appropriate absence code not code X.

This code is classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance.

Under compulsory school age

338. In cases where a parent wishes their child to begin school on a part-time basis in line with the school admissions code, schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence for sessions the pupil is not expected to attend. This must be agreed between the school and the parent they normally live with and must end at the point at which the pupil reaches compulsory school age. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed by the school and the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with.

Over compulsory school age

Where a sixth form pupil's timetable does not require them to be on site for every session of the week, a school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority may give leave of absence. The times and dates when the pupil is expected to attend the school must be agreed with the parent with whom the pupil normally lives with or the pupil.

Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can grant a leave of absence, under regulation 11(6) to temporarily reduce the timetable of a pupil of compulsory school age to part-time, if the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only part-time and have agreed the times and dates when the

pupil will, during the period of temporary part-time education, be expected to attend the school.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record when a pupil is absent with leave because they are subject to a part-time timetable in line with an agreement between the school and a parent the pupil normally lives with that the pupil should temporarily be educated part-time.

Where a pupil is receiving a full-time education, but only part-time at the school in question (e.g. dual registration, part-time unregistered alternative provision or flexi schooling) this code must not be used and the appropriate code for why the pupil is not in school for that session should be used.

Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

All schools are able to grant a leave of absence at their discretion. A leave of absence should not, and from school maintained by a local authority or a special school not maintained by a local authority, must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

Schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority can only grant such a leave of absence under regulation 11(11), where an application is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with (or the pupil if they will be over compulsory school age by the time of the absence).

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Schools that are not required to follow regulation 11, must still use this code to record where a pupil is absent with leave for a reason that is not covered by another leave of absence code.

Pregnant pupils

Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Schools are expected to act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific facts and circumstances of each case. Ultimately, it is at the school's discretion how much leave to grant.

Code G: Holiday not granted by the school

The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday.

A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet established

Schools must follow up all unexplained and unexpected absence in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has not yet been established before the register closes, the absence must be recorded with code N.

Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, schools must amend the pupil's record to Code O.

Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances

Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session.

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, after which a pupil will be marked as absent. This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes.

Code Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

The pupil is unable to attend the school because a local authority has a duty set out in regulation 10(12) or (13) to make access arrangements to enable the pupil's attendance at school and have failed to do so.

Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.

Walking distance in relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available route.

Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.

Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.

Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed

Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be marked with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.

This code may not be used for any planned closure such as weekends or holidays.

Code Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention

The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are:

in police detention,

remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or

detained under a sentence of detention.

If a pupil is remanded to local authority accommodation, they should attend school as normal where possible and where it is not possible any absence should be recorded using the appropriate code.

A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e. non-detained) part of a sentence of detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day.

Schools are expected to communicate with the pupil's Youth Offending Team worker while the pupil is in custody and remains on the school roll to discuss the pupil's educational needs, progress and return to the school upon their release where appropriate. Education is a key part of effective resettlement, therefore it is important that schools maintain contact with the Youth Offending Team throughout the sentence to support the child's resettlement where appropriate.

Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be:

contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), or

prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.

Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school.

This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause.

Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6)).

Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register

To enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens.

Most school admissions involve the school or admission authority offering a place to the parent of the prospective pupil (or, in the case of admission to sixth form, the prospective pupil). An offer of a place is not an agreement. Before a pupil can be registered at a school the parent (or prospective pupil) must have accepted the offer, either by agreeing the starting day in advance or by the fact of the pupil attending the school on that day. In the normal admissions round, when parents have accepted the school place and starting day offered, the local authority can communicate that agreement to schools on behalf of the parent. This can also be the case where the local authority coordinate in-year applications for school places.

Schools must enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name must be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before the beginning of the first session on that day.

If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed starting day, the school must follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence.

Code #: Planned whole school closure

Whole school closures that are known and planned in advance such as:

- days between terms.
- half terms.
- occasional days (for example, bank holidays)
- weekends (where it is required by the management information system);
- up to 5 non-educational days; and
- use of the whole school as a polling station.

Removing a child from the school roll (it is vital that you are always professionally curious when following these processes)

A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. When any of the situations set out in regulation 9 occurs, the pupil's name must be deleted. A pupil's name must not be removed for any other reason and doing so could constitute off-rolling.

In accordance with regulation 13(4) to (6), a school must make a return to the local authority when a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register (a Deletion Return). This does not apply where the pupil's name is deleted at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the school's most senior class (for example, pupils who leave primary school at the end of Year 6), unless the local authority has requested such information.

Where a school notifies the local authority that a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, as set out in regulation 13(4), the school must provide the local authority with the following information about the pupil from the admission register:

- full name;
- address;

- the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
- at least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency;
- if applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil will start living there; if applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school;
- the reason set out in regulation 9(1) or (3) under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register.

A school cannot retrospectively delete a pupil's name from the admission register or attendance register. The admission register and attendance register must be an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. A pupil's attendance must be recorded up until the date that the pupil's name is deleted from the admission register.

Elective Home Education (EHE):

The LA must be notified on the day of receiving the de-registration letter from the parent with a copy of the letter. The pupil should be taken off roll from the day the school receives the letter or in cases where the parent is giving advance notice of the date requested. Do not backdate it to an earlier date than receipt of the letter even if the parent requests this. The school should confirm that the pupil has been registered with the LA as EHE to ensure that they have assumed responsibility for the pupil. Do not just assume that because the school has submitted the paperwork it has all gone through.

Pupil Moves Out of Area: unreasonable distance to travel. Submit the Statutory Notification as soon as the school finds this out. Continue to track destination and liaise with LA admissions team. They will advise the school when a pupil may be removed from roll if it has been established that the pupil/family have left the last known address and their new location is known. They may allow the school to backdate the leaving date if they or the school receives confirmation of the pupil starting at another school or within the care of a different LA. The school must have written confirmation from the LA to backdate the leaving date. If the school does not receive this and the school has no other confirmation of where the pupil is the school must keep them on roll for 20 days.

Pupil Emigrates: The school must follow the procedure above for moving out of area but also need to have ascertained from the parent the forwarding address, details of destination school and moving date.

Pupil Transfers to a New School: Confirm the pupil's start date at the new school and that the pupil has started there. Submit the Statutory Notification on the day the school has it confirmed that the pupil started at their new school. The school can take the pupil off roll from the confirmed start date or the last school day if it precedes it e.g., a Friday and they started on a Monday. If the start date is the first day of a school term the school can back date the leaving date for the school's pupil to the last day of the previous term. If the school must investigate in the new term to find out why the pupil is 'absent' keep them on roll until the school gets a confirmed start date at the new school. If there is a gap between the leaving date the school has been given by a parent and the start date for a pupil, the pupil should remain on the school's roll, marked absent, until the transfer school confirms the pupil has started there. If after ten days, the pupil has still not started, the school should submit a CME form. The school cannot remove a CME pupil from the school's roll for a further ten days from the initial notification or safeguarding referral (so 20 days in total from the first day of absence) unless the LA confirms where the pupil has gone.



Pupil attendance policy

Appendix 2

Practical information for parents

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child, therefore, Loders CE Primary Academy expects everyone to uphold their responsibilities for promoting attendance at school.

To do this everyone must understand their role in promoting a positive culture of attendance and be clear about what is required of them individually as well as how they need to work together in partnership with others.

Attendance expectations

Parents/carers responsibilities:

- ensure pupils attend regularly and punctually.
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- ensure that their children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.
- do everything you can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as by making medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- work with the school and your child to address any in-school barriers to attendance and support their learning by taking an interest in what they have been doing at school.
- enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that you child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that your child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance.
- provide the school with more than one emergency contact for your child.
- provide proof of medical appointments that can only be attended during the school day.
- make early contact with us when you become aware of problems with your child attending school.
- attend meetings if concerns are identified.
- participate in Early Help Meetings if required.
- support attendance contracts where appropriate.

The school day:

The school gates are open from: 8:35pm. The school day starts at 9.00am. All pupils should be in their classroom at this time.

The first (morning) registration session starts at 8.50am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their designated classroom by 9.00am. The register closes at 9.30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend before this time. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that the pupil is on site, (U) but will count as an absent mark.

Pupils arriving late should report to the main school office.

The second (afternoon) registration session start at 1.00pm.

If a pupil needs to leave school during the day, they must sign out at the main reception with a parent once authorisation has been given from the school office.

Pupils educated off-site are monitored daily for their attendance at the off-site/alternative provision. Staff work closely with the staff at the off-site provision, the pupil, and their parents to support the pupil to maintain good attendance.

How to report your child's absence

It is the responsibility of the parent to inform us of a pupil absence and to inform us of any changes to contact details.

Parents are expected to inform us of their pupil's absence **before 9.00 a.m.** on each day of absence providing the reason for absence giving full details and when the pupil will be returning to school. Parents can call the school office on 01308 423418 and leave a voicemail message or speak to a member of staff (after 8.30am). They can also send an email to the office address (lodersoffice@acornacademy.org).

We will contact parents and/or other listed emergency contacts where no contact has been made. Where required, we may conduct reasonable enquiries with friends or neighbours. If no contact is made, we may request a welfare check from the police. All welfare checks should be carried out on or before day 3 of an unexplained absence.

Reasons for absence

Appointments

As far as possible, medical, and dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to us prior to the appointment.

Pupils must attend before and after the appointment wherever possible. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the day, they must be signed out by an adult listed on the pupil's record. Should a pupil arrive late following an appointment, they should report to the school office to be signed in.

Religious Observance

Parents must inform us, in advance, if absences are required for days of religious observance. We will authorise absences where a reasonable request is made. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Illness

In order to make informed decisions about their pupil's fitness for attending parents are encouraged to refer to the NHS guidance ['Is My Child Too Ill for School?'](#). Any authorisation of absence through illness is done so at the discretion of the Head of School or member of staff delegated to carry out this task.

In the case of an illness which lasts for five days or more (or four days in the event of an INSET day or Bank Holiday), parents may be asked to provide additional medical evidence before authorising the absence, however this will only be requested if there is any genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. In this instance, if medical evidence is not provided, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Where attendance is of a serious concern, we may require medical evidence to authorise any further periods of absence through illness. This will be determined on an individual basis. Parents will be notified of this by letter. Telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent will not be accepted as medical evidence when attendance is a serious concern. For the purpose of this policy, 'serious concern' may

be defined as: repeated unexplained/unauthorised absences or 3 separate illnesses within a half term where no medical condition or underlying health issues have been identified.

Acceptable forms of medical evidence include:

- Medical card with one appointment entered with the pupil's name and surgery stamp included, signed by the receptionist
- Text message or email confirming the appointment
- Letter from a professional such as a hospital consultant
- Evidence of consultation with NHS 111
- Medication prescribed by a GP
- Copy of prescription
- Print screen of medical notes / call log
- Letters detailing hospital appointments Doctor or GP 'sick notes' are not required, and we do not expect parents to request these from their GPs.

In some cases, a pupil may be absent for long term due to an illness or injury. We will liaise with families to ensure children return to school quickly and that there are no safeguarding concerns. On occasions where this is not possible, and the section 19 (of the Education Act 1996) threshold is met, we will make a referral to the Local Authority Medical Panel which provides educational opportunities for pupils who are unable to attend their regular school.

Traveller Pupils Travelling Traveller Absence

- The school will authorise the absence of a Traveller pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.
- This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents as necessary.
- Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible.
- Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

The aim for the attendance of Traveller students, in common with all other students, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act (1944), Section 86, states that a Traveller parent/carer is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e., 200 half days) in a year. It is

important to note that this is only relevant when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is regularly attending school when that trade/business permits following a request from parents (and the minimum 200 session criteria is met).

It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller pupils is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents/carers of their duties to ensure that their child is receiving a suitable education when not at school.

It is parent's responsibility to:

- ensure that your child's ethnicity has been registered with the school. You can ask the school to correct this or update it
- ensure you tell your child's school ahead of time. 2 weeks' notice is useful.
- your children should attend as much school as possible
- it is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child is accessing at least 100 days (200 sessions) of school in any 12-month period
- to have regular contact with their child's school whilst travelling. Once a week is suggested
- to support their child to complete the work set by schools whilst travelling
- if staying in a new area for a week or more, the parent/guardian can register their child for a temporary place at any school – called 'dual registration'.

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil.

The school will:

- Work with parents to improve attendance, be mindful of the barriers pupils face, make reasonable adjustments, and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education. It is also expected that parents will engage with the support offered both internally and with external partners to ensure our children have all the support they need to thrive.
- Encourage positive conversations so that a good support plan can put in place including making reasonable adjustments.

- Consider possible explanations for absence including Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). See [Anxiety based school avoidance \(ABSA\) – Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/education-and-families).
- Work with parents to consider whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Ensure relevant referrals are made for pupils who are too ill to attend school, which may include medical panel (under section 19 of the Education Act 1996) and or medical agency support such as CAMHS.
- Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers this may include considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place and consider whether a time-limited, closely monitored and reviewed, phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxiety about school attendance.

Requesting Leave in Term Time

Absence for purposes of leave during term time can only be authorised by the Headteacher / Principal, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations (2006). “Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.” Under the Regulations, retrospective authorisation for leave in exceptional circumstances is not permitted.

The fundamental principles for defining ‘exceptional circumstances’ are that they are: ‘rare; significant; unavoidable and short’. Holidays during term time will not usually be considered as exceptional circumstances.

The following guiding principles apply:

- Term-times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off a year including weekends and school holidays. We will rightly prioritise attendance.
- The decision to authorise a pupil’s absence is wholly at the Head of School’s discretion based on their assessment and merits of each individual request.
- It is important to note that Heads of School can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all.

- If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term-time, then it would be normal to authorise absence for such an event – holidays are therefore not considered ‘exceptional circumstances’.
- It is acceptable for the Head of School to take a pupil’s record of attendance into account when making absence-related decisions.
- We will take the needs of the families of service personnel into account if this prevents them from being able to take family holidays during scheduled holiday time.
- We have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities.

The following might be considered as exceptional circumstance:

- Religious festivals: the school should authorise any absence where the parent/carer’s religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival. For example: There are two key festivals in Islam, Eid-ul-Fitr (celebration that takes place at the end of Ramadan, the period of fasting) and Eid-ul-Adha (festival of sacrifice). The dates of these key events are set according to the Islamic calendar. Muslim families usually need to take one or two days to celebrate these important festivals.
- Religious rites e.g. Bar Mitzvah, Holy Communion. The Head of School will consider each request for leave of absence individually to determine the number of days approved.
- Illness or death of an immediate family member; the Head of School should consider time needed for the length of journey when child needs to travel abroad.
- Child, parent/carer requires medical treatment overseas or elsewhere in the UK due to language barrier or requiring specialist treatment elsewhere.
- Cultural celebrations such as Chinese New Year or Diwali. Cultural celebrations give children a feeling of belonging and make them feel part of their culture. This sense of identity is like a natural buoy for a child’s emotional health.
- Children attending their annual exam in their home country. There are exams which are compulsory in some EU countries. They are normally during holidays but can occasionally be requested during term time.
- Child, parent/ carer’s visa have been revoked and they need to return to their birth country whilst pursuing the renewal of a visa.

Family emergencies need careful consideration before decisions about attendance are made. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the pupil to miss education for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school

with support from staff and peers can provide children with stability. The school routine can offer a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty. Relevant members of staff will work with parents to decide what is in the best interest of the pupil.

How the school monitors attendance and takes action about absence

Following up absence

We will contact parents and/or other listed emergency contacts where no contact has been made. Where required, we may conduct reasonable enquiries with friends or neighbours. If no contact is made, we may request a welfare check from the police. All welfare checks should be carried out on or before day 3 of an unexplained absence.

Where it is appropriate, a member of staff may carry out a 'Return to School Interview' to discuss the absence and to offer any support. Following three separate periods of absence the interview will be carried out by a senior member of staff.

Monitoring absence figures

Pupils with 90% or less attendance are classified as Persistent Absence (PA). PA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences.

Pupils with 50% or less attendance are classified as Severe Absence (SA). SA includes both authorised and unauthorised absences

All PA pupils will have bespoke action plans to try to improve their attendance to above 97%.

Taking action

Where it is appropriate, a member of staff may carry out a 'Return to School Interview' to discuss the absence and to offer any support. Following three separate periods of absence the interview will be carried out by a senior member of staff.

It may occasionally be necessary to inform parents that no further absences will be authorised for a particular pupil unless medical evidence is provided. This decision can only be made by the Head of School in consultation with, where relevant, the SENDCO.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send children to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence. Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their pupil, where the pupil is of compulsory school age. The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head of School, in line with the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may consider:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- Singular incidences of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where a suspended/excluded pupil is seen in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

The national Framework for Penalty Notices (as of 19th August 2024)

- The national framework for penalty notices is to help tackle inconsistencies in their use. The fine to parents must be considered if a child misses 5 days of school for unauthorised absence. Alongside this, costs for fines will go up.
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £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 issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
- Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school.
- A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence (for example an unauthorised holiday in term time). These will be issued in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

- All state funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice.
- The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session.
- This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence.
- For Example;
 - 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks
 - 10 sessions of holiday in one week
 - 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks
- The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years.

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 fixed period or permanent exclusion.

The school must have notified the parents of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place. This type of penalty notice is not included in the National Framework and therefore not subject to the same considerations about support being provided or count towards the limit as part of the escalation process in the case of repeat offences for non-attendance.

Individual Attendance Plan

Please note: It is important to capture a full picture of support offered over time. Therefore, rather than deleting or editing historical entries, it is better to add subsequent interventions or updates to the plan along with the date that these were added. If the school has any other additional record keeping systems (such as an online safeguarding system), staff should ensure that the relevant details are recorded in both places.

A separate form to record review meetings can be copied and pasted as many times as needed.

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------|
| Name of Pupil | | |
| Year Group & Class | | |
| Staff Supporting with Attendance Plan & roles | | |
| Date plan was agreed | | |
| Attendance History | | |
| (to include %'s, relevant codes, patterns & noted trends, historical patterns or information that may be relevant) | | |
| | | |
| Current risk Factors/Barriers to Attendance | | |
| | | |
| Academic Targets | Milestones | Date Achieved |
| Target 1 | Make sure each target is measurable and SMART | |
| Target 2 | | |
| Target 3 | | |

| Strategies to be implemented by the school | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Details of the strategy (& the date commenced) | Purpose of the Strategy | Member of staff responsible |
| e.g. wake up calls for a fixed period | e.g. to establish an effective morning routine | e.g. HOS, Class Teacher or Admin |

| Expectations of the pupil | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Details of the expectations | How have we told the pupil? | Monitoring Arrangements (who & when) |
| e.g. Set alarm for 7am everyday | Discussion with class teacher or HOS | e.g. HOS or Admin |

| Expectations of the family | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| Details of the expectations | How has this been agreed? | Monitoring Arrangements (who & when) |
| e.g. Parents to call the school by 8.45am to report any reason for absence | e.g. At a face to face attendance meeting | Admin |

| External support | | |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Details of agency/partner | Support Being Offered | Date Support Commenced |
| e.g. CSC | e.g. Early Help referral made as | |

| Record of Attendance review meeting | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Date of Review | |
| Persons Present | |
| Situation since last review | |
| Milestones achieved since last review | |
| Areas discussed | |
| Outcome of meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> Continue with initial plan <input type="checkbox"/> Continue plan with new or additional strategies added <input type="checkbox"/> Escalate attendance plan to next stage |
| Date of next review | |

