



Appleton Academy Attendance Policy



| Approved By | Approval | Next Review Date |
|----------------------|----------|------------------|
| Appleton Academy LAB | Oct 22 | 2024/25 – Term 1 |
| | | |
| | | |

Appleton Academy is a community that works together to inspire, nurture and develop one another. A place where you can 'be your best'.

1. Introduction

Excellent attendance and punctuality is essential for every child if they are to be their best. We set an attendance target of 96% as the minimum that we expect for all children and young people.

Evidence shows that those children who attend school regularly make better progress academically and socially. To help a child achieve full attendance, parents and carers play a critical role in helping us promote good attitudes towards attendance. The impact of poor attendance is significant and contributes to life long disadvantage, social and emotional challenges.

Pupils are expected to arrive on time, every day. As a community, it is important we ensure that children are present at every opportunity, arriving on time, not missing school unnecessarily and are not being taken out of the academy without authorisation. Attendance is monitored closely, and we will follow up unexplained absences with parents or carers.

Formal monitoring of attendance takes place twelve times a year and where a pupil's attendance record reaches a concerning level, we will contact parents or carers to discuss ways in which we can support all parties to help improve the attendance of the child or young person concerned.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance we will work together with them, their parents and partner organisations to remove barriers, by building strong and trusting relationships. Therefore, improving attendance is everyone's business.

2. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regard to school attendance by ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time, efficient education to which they are entitled; acting early to address patterns of absence and creating a culture in which the importance of good school attendance is understood and valued by all parties.

This policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents must follow to report their child's absence from school and to remind them of their legal duty, to ensure their child attends school regularly. Education law defines parents as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently, taking into account the individual needs of our pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Therefore, in the development of our policy we have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It is vital that children and young people develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Therefore, the school will encourage 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. If the child is unable to attend the school for any reason, the parent should inform the school of the reason on the first day of absence. If the school is concerned about a pupil's attendance for any reason, we will contact the parent to discuss the matter, in the first instance.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. A child becomes of 'compulsory school age' on the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday and ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of Year 11.

We want our pupils to go to school every day unless they are really not well enough to attend. We believe that children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all our pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential.

Regular attendance and punctuality is essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

In April 2017 the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance “in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school”, therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil’s attendance is deemed to be irregular.

We will do all we can to encourage our pupils to attend. We will also make available the best provision we can, for any pupil who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.

Please see DfE guidance documents ‘[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - December 2015](#)’ and ‘[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013](#)’.

We believe that one of the most important factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and a sense of belonging. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children and young people, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents.

By promoting good attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community.
- Raise our pupils’ awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, pupils and staff.
- Work in partnership with parents, including regularly informing them about their child’s absence and attendance levels.
- Support pupils back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality.

2.1 Effects of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days absence can result in children missing a significant number of lessons.

| Attendance | Days Lost in a Year | Weeks lost in a Year | Lost Learning in Primary | Lost Learning in Secondary | Lost Learning Combined |
|------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 95% | 10 | 2 | 14 weeks/ 3 months | 10 weeks | 24 weeks/ 6 months |
| 90% | 20 | 4 | 28 weeks/ 7 months | 20 weeks | 48 weeks/ 12 months |
| 85% | 30 | 6 | 42 weeks / 11 months | 30 weeks | 72 weeks/ 18 months |

3. Safeguarding and Attendance

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil’s attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2022 version, or as updated by the DfE) we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. 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 cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil’s welfare.

4 Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the government guidance 2022 [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s 2015 statutory guidance on [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures](#).

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

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

The DfE's guidance on the [school census](#) explains the persistent absence threshold.

5. Using data to support improvements in attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as a '[persistent absentee](#)' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason. Pupils are defined as '[severely absent](#)' if they miss more than 50% of possible sessions.

The school will ensure that data is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any pupil becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include: identifying the individual needs of pupils; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where a formalised approach in conjunction with the local authority is required in line with the DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance \(2022\)](#).

6. Understanding Barriers to Attendance

In relation to understanding barriers to attendance, we will ensure all pupils and parents are treated with dignity and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a pupil or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

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. Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners.

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. In working with parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these pupils face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Reduced timetable will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period to support pupils to reintegrate back into education to access fulltime provision.

The school is committed to share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

7. Staff Training on Attendance

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard pupils. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school staff require to address them. The school therefore will facilitate training for all staff to understand

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances,
- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers
- the school/trusts' strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance,

- and the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

For staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, they will receive training to include

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data,
- and any additional training that would be beneficial to support pupils and pupil cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

What the Law Says and School Procedures:

8. Contents of the Admissions Register

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. The school will enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend.

A pupil's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, applies.

It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date. Therefore, we encourage parents to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

9. Contents of Attendance Register

The law makes it clear that schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion the school must record whether each pupil is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to improve attendance and is supported by the use of our Management Information System to record attendance information.

9.1 Present at School (and Lateness)

Pupils are marked present if they are in school when the register is taken. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

Senior Leaders will meet with parents of those children and young people who are frequently late arriving at school to investigate reasons and suggest solutions to enable more punctual attendance.

- Primary pupils must arrive by 8.30am on each school day and Secondary pupils by 8.40am.
- Registers will be kept open until 9.15am.
- The afternoon register is taken at the start of the afternoon session for all pupils.
- A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late (**L**) – which counts as present.

If a pupil arrives after the register has closed (9.15am) they will be marked with the unauthorised absence code "Late after registers close" (**U**) which is an unauthorised absence mark. However, if the pupil is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised and coded accordingly. See DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).

9.2 Effects of Late Arrival at School

When a child arrives late to school, they miss important events like assembly, teacher instructions and introductions. Children often also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage children and disrupt the learning of others.

| Mins Late per day | Equal to Lost days teaching per year | Over 7 Yrs of Primary | Over 5 Years of Secondary | School Career |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| 5 mins | 3 days | 4 weeks | 3 weeks | 7 weeks |
| 10 mins | 6 days | 8 weeks | 6 weeks | 14 weeks |
| 15 mins | 9 days | 12 weeks | 9 weeks | 21 weeks |

10 Authorised Absence

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by the school:

10.1 Illness

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. The school follows Department for Education guidance **'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2022)** 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.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, 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.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. 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.

If a child is unable to attend school, you must contact the attendance line on 01274 421053 or via the school office: 01274 600550 (option 1). Email: attendanceteam@appletonacademy.co.uk

All absences must be notified before 8.30am or it may not be authorised.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

10.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead - Mrs Wightman for further information on the support available. Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

10.3 Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the school office by a parent or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

10.3 Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult, and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment, and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised.

10.4 Religious Observance

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends. In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

10.5 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.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.

Children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

10.6 Suspensions (aka Exclusions)

If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as an Exclusion. The school will follow the current [DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions](#).

Any exclusion must be agreed by the Executive Headteacher.

The school will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. If the pupil is a Child in Care, the school will notify the pupil's carer, social worker and the appropriate Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

The pupil should be collected from the school office by the parent or another authorised adult, and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

11. First Day of Absence Response

Where a child fails to attend school and no reason has been provided by the parent, the school will make every effort to contact the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for the absence. However, parents should be aware that the reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent.

A text will be sent to parents of pupils who are absent without notification requesting a reason for absence. Where we are unable to speak to a child's parent or carer on their first day of absence, we will try a child's other emergency contacts.

If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, we may carry out a home visit or request a Welfare Check from the police.

12. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

To help focus on good attendance the school will:

- Give certificates for very good attendance at the end of Terms 2, 4 and 6 and for the whole year at the end of Term 6
- Provide parents with a copy of their child's attendance percentage in school reports
- Provide parents with a copy of their child's Attendance Certificate for the year at the end of Term 6
- Write to parent and carers when there has been an improvement in attendance
- Provide rewards and incentives (as appropriate) to encourage good attendance where it is felt this would support and encourage a child to attend regularly and/or punctually
- Secondary aged pupils will receive a weekly attendance sticker to go into their planner

13 Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. The school will consider each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence 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 school's discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

The definition of an Exceptional Circumstance would be an absence that is rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By unavoidable, we mean an event that could not reasonably be arranged at another time.

Parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available on the school website. The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least four weeks before the absence. Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing. Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence in order to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage we will follow the necessary protocols. (Please see our school's Safeguarding Policy for more information.)

All term time absence for children in care should be discussed at the child's Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting in advance where possible and agreed with the Social Care and the appropriate Virtual School. This permission should be gained before school is approached for approval. The school will contact the appropriate Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a child in care.

14 Term-time Holidays

Absences from school for the purposes of a term-time holiday will not be authorised. Term-time are for education – children and families have 175 days off school every year to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays.

The Executive Headteacher may consider authorising a leave of absence if the reason is considered to be an Exceptional Circumstance (as outlined in section 6). By exceptional we mean rare, significant, unavoidable and short. By unavoidable, we mean an event that could not reasonably be arranged at another time.

The Executive Headteacher will not normally consider any of the reasons below as an Exceptional Circumstance and any requests for a Leave of Absence for these reasons will not normally be authorised and may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices:

- Family holiday or holiday to visit relatives
- Cheaper cost of a holiday / flights / accommodation during term-time than during the school holidays
- Availability of the desired holiday accommodation or location
- Weather conditions in the desired holiday location
- A holiday being booked by or paid for by someone else as a gift
- Overlapping a holiday with the beginning or end of a school holiday period
- Attending a wedding (including if that wedding is taking place abroad)
- Parents inability to secure a holiday from work during school holiday periods

Please note that this list is not exhaustive

Unauthorised absences will result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

15. Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or a pupil is absent from school without the permission of the school - including for a term-time holiday. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Attending a wedding or other celebration (including weddings taking place abroad)
- Having a hair-cut
- Menstruation
- Friendship disputes and disputes with the school
- Closure of a siblings' school or class (for example due to strike action)
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a pupil is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions.

16. Approved Educational Activity (AEA)

When pupils are attending educational activities off the school site that have been approved by the school, the register will be marked to show this is the case. (See DfE 2020 School Attendance guidance.)

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider such as another school, or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, our school will make arrangements for the pupil to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a pupil is attending an alternative education provider, which is not a school or Pupil Referral Unit, for part or all of their education, we will mark the sessions which the pupil attends the alternative setting as code **B** (off-site educational activity). The school expects the alternative provider (AP) to notify us of any absences by individual pupils, to ensure we become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and take follow up action as necessary.

Attendance updates will be provided on a weekly basis, or more frequently if agreed with the alternative setting.

Any attendance concerns will be followed up by us, in conjunction with the AP.

16.1 Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities

Under Section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, are required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises their absence(s).

Where a pupil requests to be absent for a performance or activity, the individual or organisation responsible for organising, producing or running the activity/performance is required to request a licence from the pupil's home LA.

The organiser is required to allow sufficient time for the LA to process the request – the LA will refuse to consider an application if the performance or activity is less than 21 days away

17 Truancy

Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of pupils, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting.

If truancy is suspected, the Head of School is notified, who will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, the parent will be invited to a meeting with a senior leader to discuss the incident followed up with letter of warning stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally- condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school

18. Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (as set out in the law and DfE guidance)

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record pupils as 'Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences):

- Our school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause
- The transport provided by our school or the Local Authority is not available and the pupil's home is not within statutory walking distance. (See the DfE's 'Home to school travel and transport' guidance document, or ask the school for a printed copy.)
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
- A pupil has moved area but has not yet started at a new school and continued attendance at Appleton is not possible
- The pupil is in custody, but still on the school roll. (If the school has evidence that the pupil is attending educational activities, we can record those sessions as 'present at approved educational activity'.)

19 Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time

Sometimes pupils can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reason for the pupil's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand

the reasons why a pupil is reluctant to attend in order to be able to support pupils and parents in the best way.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a pupil, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with the Head of Year, Attendance Leader or Deputy Headteacher to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.

If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a warning letter.

We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

If our school has safeguarding concerns about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

20. Pupils on Reduced (Part-time) Timetables

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupil's needs, we will work with the pupil, parent and other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any reduced timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to full-time provision as soon as possible.

21. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child.

Unauthorised absence from school can result in a number of different outcomes for parents and children. Each case is considered individually.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. Parents with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered to be a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.

A pupil's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

1. A Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 payable within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.)

2. Prosecution.

Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and /or 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#) for more information and Bradford Local Authority information via www.bradford.gov.uk)

Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

In addition to Penalty Notices, there is a range of other legal interventions open to schools. Schools, trusts and local authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution.

It is for individual schools and local authorities to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family.

These are:

- Parenting contracts
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed penalty notices

22. Children Missing Education (CME)

Our school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. The school will follow Bradford Local Authority CME procedures, and make CME and Pupil Tracking referrals as appropriate. The school will seek advice from the Children Missing Education Officer if unsure about any individual cases: CME@bradford.gov.uk

23. Following up Unexplained Absences

Where no contact has been made with the school, the school will contact parents by email or telephone to try and establish the reason for a child's absence. When we establish the reason for the absence, we will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason for the absence.

If we are unable to establish the reason for absence within 2 school days, we will make the absence as unauthorised, using the **O** code. If we are concerned about a pupil's absence and are unable to contact the parent/s, we may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who we reasonably expect may be able to advise us of the pupil's whereabouts.

24. Reporting to Parents

We will include details of a pupil's attendance in their school reports and provide parents with a copy of their attendance summary for the year in Term 6. If parents wish to see a copy of their child's attendance summary at any other time during the year, they can ask for a printed copy at the school office.

Where a child's attendance drops below 95% for whatever reason, we will review the attendance and will write to parents to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

25. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence

All absences are recorded in the school attendance register in our Management Information System (SIMS) as required by the law. Information about the reason for the absence, how it was reported, by whom and any additional information pertinent to the absence may also be recorded.

26. Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Executive Headteacher or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

27 Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies.

- Child Protection Policy,
- SEND Policy,
- Anti-Bullying Policy,
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Administering Medication Policy

28 Guidance Documents:

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE May 2022)

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities (DfE Updated August 2022)

[Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-school-attendance-support-for-schools-and-local-authorities)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions)

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE January 2013)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>

Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2022)

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education)

School attendance parental responsibility measures (DfE January 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>

School census guidance and regulation

<https://www.gov.uk/education/school-censuses-and-slasc> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE July 2014)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance>

Children Missing Education Guidance (Bradford.gov.uk)

<https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/content/children-missing-education#:~:text=As%20soon%20as%20a%20pupil,should%20be%20made%20straight%20away>

Education Penalty Notice Code of Conduct (Bradford.gov.uk)

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/education-and-skills/school-support-services/attendance/>

APPENDIX 1: Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Advisory Board

The Local Advisory Board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on a termly basis (3 times a year). It also holds the Executive Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Executive Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Attendance Leader and DSL

The Attendance Leader is responsible for whole-school attendance and the school's strategic approach to attendance. The Attendance Leader will meet with parents and create attendance action plans (including where pupils are experiencing barriers to attendance) and liaise with the Education Welfare Service at Bradford Local Authority as appropriate. The Attendance Leader is also responsible for reviewing whole-school and group-specific attendance data (including monitoring the attendance of vulnerable groups - e.g. Pupil Premium or Children in Care)

The DSL will also focus on safeguarding and how attendance links to wider safeguarding concerns, taking concerns of the Attendance Team to the school's weekly Inclusion Team meetings and liaising with external agencies and make referrals to them as required.

Attendance Team

The Attendance Team consists of the Attendance Leader, Senior Attendance Administrator, Attendance Administrator, Parental Involvement Worker and Data Manager.

They will meet as a team at least once per half term to monitor and review attendance across the school – for individual pupils, vulnerable groups and the whole school.

During their meetings, the Attendance Team will identify children whose attendance is a cause for concern and put attendance interventions in place as necessary. Depending on the level of concern, the Attendance Team will involve class teachers and Pastoral Leaders and co-ordinate meetings with parents. In some cases, parents will be asked to meet with the Attendance Leader and a formal action plan will be produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.

Attendance Administration Team

The Attendance Administrators are responsible for ensuring that the daily registers are completed accurately and on time, recording the reasons for absences and following up on any missing marks as well as reporting any concerns or patterns of absence to the Attendance Team.

The Senior Administrator monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level, reports concerns about attendance to the Attendance Leader as appropriate, coordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence and advises the Executive Headteacher as required. The Senior Administrator also liaises with and makes referrals to the Education Welfare Service as directed by the Attendance Leader and produces information for teachers to support attendance conversations.

Class Teachers and Form Tutors:

Class teachers and Form Tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. Where there are attendance concerns, either raised by the class teacher themselves or by the Attendance Team, they will 'check-in' with the pupil to find out about any reasons for absence as part of their responsibilities under our school's Child Protection Policy.

Class teachers and Form Teachers will also be asked to meet with parents whose child has a falling level of attendance and is flagged as a concern by the Attendance Team.

Pastoral Leaders:

Where there are wider concerns about a child's attendance or when a parent has already met with a class teacher and form tutor to discuss attendance concerns but there has been limited or no improvement in that child's attendance, they may be asked to meet with the Pastoral Leader to discuss the concerns further.

Pastoral Leaders will also support class teachers and offer advice.

Appendix 2 – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance Codes

| Code | Description | Meaning |
|------|--|-------------------------------------|
| / | Present (AM) | Present |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present |
| B | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) | Approved Education Activity |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised |
| D | Dual registration (i.e., present at another school or PRU) | Not counted in possible attendances |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised |
| G | Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement) | Unauthorised |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments etc) | Authorised |
| J | Interview | Approved Education Activity |
| L | Late (before register closed) | Present |
| M | Medical/ Dental appointments | Authorised |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorised |
| O | Other unauthorised absence (not covered by other codes or descriptions) | Unauthorised |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Education Activity |
| S | Study leave | Authorised |
| T | Traveller absence | Authorised |
| U | Late and arrived after the register has closed | Unauthorised |
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Education Activity |
| W | Work experience (not work based training) | Approved Education Activity |
| X | Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory school age pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Y | Where the school site, or part of it, is closed due to unavoidable cause; or the transport provided by the school or local authority for pupils (who do not live with walking distance) is not available; or where a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school; or a pupil is detained in custody for less than four months. | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Z | Pupil not yet on roll | Not counted in possible attendances |
| # | School closed to all pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |

Appendix 3 Attendance Categorisation

| | % Attendance | Days Lost | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| OUTSTANDING | 100 | 0 | |
| | 99 | 2 | |
| GOOD | 98 | 4 | |
| | 97 | 6 | |
| SATISFACTORY | 96 | 8 | |
| UNSATISFACTORY | 95 | 10 | 2 school weeks of Lost Learning |
| | 94 | 12 | |
| | 93 | 14 | |
| | 92 | 16 | |
| | 91 | 18 | |
| TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE | 90 | 20 | 4 school weeks of Lost Learning |
| | 89 | 22 | |
| | 88 | 24 | |
| | 87 | 26 | |
| | 86 | 28 | |
| | 85 | 30 | |
| | 84 | 32 | |
| | 83 | 34 | |
| | 82 | 36 | |
| | 81 | 38 | |
| | 80 | 40 | 1 Half Term of Lost Learning (8wks) |
| | 79 | 42 | |
| | 78 | 44 | |
| | 77 | 46 | |
| 76 | 48 | | |
| EDUCATIONAL NEGLECT | 75 | 50 | |
| | 74 | 52 | |
| | 73 | 54 | |
| | 72 | 56 | |
| | 71 | 58 | |
| | 70 | 60 | 1 Term of Lost Learning (12 Wks) |