LINCOLN ANGLICAN ACADEMY TRUST
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Philippians 4:13 "I can do all this through Him who gives me strength"

Document Title	Attendance Policy – V3
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	2	School specific appendices
	3	**School personalisation required (in highlighted fields)**

Summary of Changes from Previous Version

Version	Date	Author	Note/Summary of Revisions
V2	July 2024	R. Street	Re-write using model document from 'The Key' and incorporating changes to August 2024 National revised attendance requirements.
V3	September 2025	Multi directory review	4.3 – planned absence refined 5.1 – further clarification around appealing against a fine 5.1 – My Child At School (MCAS) added as mechanism for communicating with school 5.2 – minor changes to wording regarding sanctions 6 – wording from Trust Attendance Principles added 7.1 – additions around suspensions 7.4 – updates around Reduced Timetables added 8 – new threshold for intervention added and New Trust redefinition of Persistent Absenteeism introduced at 92% 8.1 – minor changes to wording 8.2 – removed as explained in other sections 8.3 – updated regarding the monitoring of absence and how data is used 8.4 – updates around preventing and reducing Persistent Absenteeism 9 – updated cross referencing to policies Appendix 2 – Attendance Champion defined as having to be a member of the Senior Leadership Team Greater emphasis given to the role of the class teacher

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of the Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

This policy also complies with our trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities are contained within appendix 2.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.
We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry

- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made.
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8:40am and ends at 3:15pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at the start of the school day and will be kept open until for 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of the form time or first lesson in which registration takes place. The register for the second session will be taken at the start of the afternoon session.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by the start of the school day or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school admin / office staff, who can be contacted via the contact details on the school website.

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Parent/Carer should notify the school in advance of a planned appointment via MCAS, such as attending a medical or dental appointment and this will be counted as authorised. The school may require further evidence to help them determine the correct code to be recorded for registration purposes.
However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as unauthorised absence for the morning session.

The Attendance Champion monitors attendance and absence data (including punctuality data), and systematically and regularly analyses it.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit.

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

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.8 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

We would like to remind all families of the legal framework surrounding term-time holidays and the issuing of penalty notices for unauthorised absences, in conjunction with advice from the Local Authority.

Please be aware that there is no right of appeal against a penalty notice once it has been issued. The decision to authorise or unauthorise an absence rests solely with the Academy/School. It is important to remember you should discuss any concerns you have with the school before a leave of absence is considered.

We understand that some employers may restrict when holidays can be taken, and that travel costs can vary significantly throughout the year. However, neither of these factors constitutes an exceptional circumstance, according to guidance from the Department for Education, Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and Resources for families | Children's Commissioner for England and therefore cannot be considered, as a valid reason for authorising term-time leave.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in ensuring that your child's education remains a priority. Term time absence for events such as family holidays are always unauthorised unless in exceptional circumstances. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated via MCAS and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence. The completed form with headteacher decision will be copied, returned to the parent / carer, the second copy will be retained on the pupil record in school. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong (s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

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

5.2 Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

local authority where a penalty notice is to be issued and complete the paper work online for them to make a decision to issue a fine the Local Authority will issue the fine to parents .

Before the school considers contacting the local authority to request a penalty notice being issued, the school will consider the individual case, including:

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

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

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

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

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

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

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

Notices to improve

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

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

They will include:

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

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

In the Trust, there in an expectation that schools have the following in place as a universal offer for all pupils:

- Breakfast clubs
- Nurture rooms
- Adapted curriculum
- Specific provision for mental health concerns
- Pastoral intervention
- Lunch and breaktime clubs to reduce anxiety
- Use of Pastoral staff to 'meet and greet' students
- Use of Family Workers
- Clubs and enrichment opportunities
- Use of child mentors
- Catch up learning sessions in school and online
- Reintegration plans for longer absences (phased returns)
- Early Help Assessments (EHAs) to help meet unmet needs
- Support with travel
- Attendance conversations with the school to establish a route back to better attendance
- For those children with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP), that the provisions set out in the plan, including any related to attendance and access, are met.

In our school we:

- A positive culture of inclusion and attendance, where every child feels valued at school and wants to be here.
- Attendance checks daily and weekly.

- Attendance data feedback to staff, pupils and parents on a termly basis - when needed with targets for improvement as appropriate.
- Working with parents who are concerned that their children may be having trouble in attending school, involving other agencies if deemed appropriate and following the Lincolnshire Emotion Based School Avoidance (EBSA) Ladder where appropriate.
- Educating pupils about the value and importance of good attendance through PSHE lessons.
- Identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3. This should include the sharing of relevant information with the destination school.
- The efficient use of computerised registration systems to monitor whole school, year group, vulnerable groups (SEND and Pupil Premium) attendance data which enables analysis of patterns and trends and timely responses by the school.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance, including suspension

In developing this support, the usual processes relevant to any attendance case apply: Understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family. Working in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place and working with other the local authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available). Regularly reviewing and updating the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

In all cases, whenever a pupil returns to school, we expect all schools to have a positive and welcoming reintegration plan, including completing Trust Reintegration meeting paperwork in line with the Trust Attendance Principles document.

7.2 Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who are absent

Schools will work in partnership parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including, where applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's education, health and care plan is accessed. The school works in partnership families to help support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day. Establish strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements. Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents. Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

7.3 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence.

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, school staff a are expected to work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil.

Schools will facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue. Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents. Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.

Schools will make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I (unable to attend because of sickness) and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 10 consecutive school days or more for illness or the pupil's total number of school days missed during the school year because of illness (whether consecutive or cumulative) will reach or exceed 10 school days. This will be monitored closely, Attendance Support Plans will remain in place in a new academic year for pupils who met the threshold for persistent absence in the previous academic year.

7.4 Pupils with Reduced Timetables

In exceptional circumstances there may be the need for a reduced timetable in line with the Trust guidance. These should be used for the shortest amount of time and a return to full time attendance the shared goal (see Trust Policy on the use of Reduced Timetables)

8. Attendance monitoring and intervention thresholds

In line with our Trust Attendance Principles, we aim for all pupils attending 185/190 school days which is 97% attendance across the school year.

These are our thresholds for intervention (see Appendix 5 for further guidance):

97% - 95.1%	Notice and Contact	Attendance Lead, Teachers, Pastoral, SENDCo, Penalty Notice, Notice to improve Letter (case by case). consideration of a School Attendance Support Plan – using Trust template
95% – 92.1%	Take Action	Attendance Lead, EWO, Local Authority/ Penalty Notice, Increased need for School Attendance Support Plan – using Trust template Notice to Improve Letter (case by case).
92 % or below – Trust Persistent Absenteeism	Increase Intervention	Mandatory Support Plan, Attendance Lead, EWO, Local Authority/ Penalty Notice,

NB: For any pupil with an ongoing medical condition that requires regular Drs or hospital appointments, this will need to be considered and appropriate and reasonable steps taken by the school.

The Attendance Champion monitors attendance and absence data (including punctuality data), and systematically and regularly analyses it, taking action, in line with the Trust thresholds.

8.1 Monitoring and sharing attendance data

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. Schools will share this with their Academy Committee. Parents have access to MCAS and can view live attendance data for their children. Schools will contact parents where there are any concerns about their attendance or punctuality. Every school will celebrate good and approved attendance.

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

The Trust will closely analyse its attendance data at whole school and hub level, taking action where needed, measuring data against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for strategic improvement, and share this with the Board

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

8.2 Using data to improve attendance

The school will, in line with the Intervention Thresholds:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that have been identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers/form tutors, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data, including the DfE View Your Education Data (VYED), Insight and Bromcom, to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in their hub and in line with their Hub Impact Plan, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

8.3 Preventing and Reducing persistent and Severe absence

Before a pupil becomes Persistently Absent, there will likely have been risk indicators which increases their risk of becoming persistently absent. This could be through 'occasional days' a block of absence or a term time holiday. Overtime, if not addressed, there is an 'attrition of attendance' which culminates in persistent absenteeism which we want to avoid. We expect all schools to monitor and act on any risks of a pupil becoming persistently absent.

Nationally, persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central ~~to the~~ any school's strategy for improving attendance. However, in our Trust, in line with our Attendance Principles, 92% is our benchmark persistent absence rate which is 3 weeks missed of school which is a serious cause for concern unless explained by a one-off single event or an ongoing medical condition.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of risk of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
    - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
    - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
    - Explain the help that is available
    - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
    - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Refer to LAAT Attendance Principles document to evaluate and implement alternative support to remove any attendance barriers and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Links with other policies and Trust guidance

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- School Behaviour policy
- LAAT Attendance Principles Document
- LAAT Guidance on the Use of Reduced Timetables
- Trust Suspension and Exclusion Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Reduced Timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a reduced timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health) State specific reason provided
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Academy Trust/Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring an effective whole school culture of school attendance underpinned by high expectations of all trust and school/school leaders, staff, pupils and parents, alongside clear procedures and responsibilities.
- Offer a clear vision for high attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values, which are communicated to and understood by staff, pupils and families.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - All schools in the trust/the school recording attendance accurately in the register, and sharing the required information with the DfE and local authorities.
    - All schools in the trust working effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the trust and school policies and ethos with a clear, written school attendance policy conveying clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes.
- Ensuring the schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources.
- Ensuring the trust/schools' have high aspirations for all pupils, adapting processes and support to pupils' individual needs.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole trust and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs.
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance.
- Ensuring all staff receive adequate training on attendance, including with teachers from across the trust, as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
    - The importance of good attendance
    - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
    - The trust's/school's legal requirements for keeping registers
    - The trust's/school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Ensuring dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the trust and providing regular opportunities for staff from different schools to come together, learn from each other and share resources.
- Holding the headteacher(s)/head(s) of school to account for the implementation of this policy.
- Identifying and monitoring attendance patterns across the trust's schools to identify common issues and barriers, and share effective practice between schools.

Headteacher/Head of School

The headteacher/head of school is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting progress to governors/trust.
- Ensuring accurate completion of admission and attendance registers.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils, ensuring every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities for attendance.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies including to address persistent and severe absence.

- Ensuring that all staff adopt a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary and/or authorising [role] to be able to do so.
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs.
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels.
- Building and modelling respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.

The Executive Leadership Team

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Driving attendance improvement across the trust
- Working more intensively with schools who require support to improve attendance
- Liaising with the DfE's regional teams for advice about wider support programmes

The Designated Senior Leader/Attendance Champion

The designated senior leader/attendance champion is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school.
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Ensuring practice is in place to address persistent and severe absence is robust.
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data regularly to allow early intervention to address issues.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff.
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed.
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues.
- Undertaking home visits in line with school's safeguarding responsibilities to engage families and ensure children are safe.
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families ensuring escalation procedures to address absence are initiated proactively, understood by pupils and families, implemented consistently and their impact reviewed regularly.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Kate Chevli and can be contacted via 01406 370333.

Attendance Champion/School Attendance Officer

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring the recording of attendance and absence data is accurate.
- Ensuring robust day-to-day processes are in place.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data, tracking and following up absence and poor punctuality (implement punctuality routines such as late gate or sign in procedures).
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher/head of school.

- Working with other agencies to tackle persistent absence.
- Identifying and, where possible, mitigating potential barriers to good attendance in liaison with families and relevant support agencies.
- Implementing children missing education (CME) procedures when appropriate.
- Keep parents informed on a regular basis of their child's attendance and absence record (this should be communicated to parents in an easy-to-understand format).

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

Are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors are also responsible for:

- In line with Teacher standards, building strong relationships with pupils and their families to mitigate poor attendance from pupils.
- Noticing pupil absence and reaching out to parents/carers when patterns of absence begin to be noticed.
- Ensuring the effective whole school culture of high attendance is underpinned by setting an example of punctuality and good attendance.
- Implementing the policy and ensuring it is applied fairly and consistently.
- Informing the school attendance champion/line manager of any concerns;
- Emphasising with pupils the importance of punctuality and good attendance.
- Reminding parents of their commitment to this policy.
- Building respectful relationships with staff, pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Making sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Communicating openly and honestly with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them.

School Admin/Office Staff

School admin/office staff will:

- Follow daily and weekly attendance guidance to ensure MIS system is updated in line with standard operating procedures.
- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.

Parents/Carers

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. Most parents fulfil this responsibility by registering their children at a school.

- Parents whose children are registered at a school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend and stay at school every day school is open.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance.
- Informing the school on the first day of absence, within one hour of the school day starting, providing the school with an explanation for the absence.
- Informing the school of any changes to their contact details.

- Working in partnership with the school to resolve issues and help the school to understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Booking any medical appointments outside of the school day where possible.
- Only requesting leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.

Appendix 3: Communications to Parents

School Attendance Intervention - Communication with Parents

Attendance 97% – 95.1%

If a child absent from school

- Staff will contact parent (via **phone call**)
- If needed, arrange **face-to-face meeting**

If poor attendance in previous year, school will;

- Monitor closely
- Immediate follow-up actions
- Compare year-on-year data

- ***If no improvement:***
  - Parents will be contacted to discuss and implement **Attendance Support Plan**
  - If unauthorised absence was a concern: The school will consider sending a **Notice to Improve Letter** to Parents
  - If 10 unauthorised sessions in 10 weeks: The school will consider sending a **Penalty Notice**

Attendance 95% – 92.1%

Initial letter to parents

- ***If further absence:***
  - Parents will be invited to attend a **School Attendance Support Meeting** to discuss barriers and an **Attendance Support Plan** agreed and implemented.
- ***If attendance continues to fall:***
  - The school will consider sending a **Notice to Improve Letter** to Parents
- ***If unauthorised absence continues:***
  - The school will consider sending a **Penalty Notice**

**Children in this range are at risk of persistent absenteeism and rapid action is required*

Attendance 92% and Below

Immediate action required

Parents will be invited to an **Attendance Support Meeting**

- a **Mandatory Attendance Support Plan** will be completed with Parents
- School may request **medical evidence**
  - If not provided, absence may remain unauthorised
  - May lead to **Local Authority Fine** being issued to Parents

Home visits for attendance (97% and below) may be undertaken if there are any concerns a letter will be sent to parents with a date and a time and the purpose of the visit. If there has been no communication with the school regarding a child's absence, then the school may visit unannounced to ensure the safety of a child.

Any action by the school will be considered on a case-by-case basis, as there may be children with an ongoing medical condition that require medical appointments or spells in hospital. Other personal circumstances should also be considered and appropriate and reasonable actions taken by the school.

Schools must continue to build and maintain positive relations with parents through clear communication. They will continue to listen and act appropriately to ensure all families receive the necessary support.

Appendix 4: Thresholds for Intervention – Trust Wide Protocols

This guidance outlines the steps schools within the trust should follow when managing pupil absence, ensuring a consistent, supportive, and proactive approach to improving attendance.

97% - 95.1% - When a child is absent from school in the first instance a school staff member will contact the parent/s to see if there are any barriers impacting on attendance and if any support is needed to ensure the child is in school. The initial contact method will be via a telephone call and if a parent/school feel that a face-to-face meeting would be more supportive then this should be arranged and a date and time agreed by both parties.
In certain cases where a child's attendance was poor in the previous academic year these children's attendance should be monitored closely, and actions should be followed up immediately to try and ensure the attendance does not fall further as these children are higher risk of becoming persistent absentee.
Schools will compare attendance data year on year and look at reasons for absence. If attendance does not improve an Attendance Support Plan would be discussed with the parent and put in place. If unauthorised absence of a child was a concern in previous terms, then a Notice to Improve Letter should be considered. Where a child is on an Attendance Support Plan and a Notice to Improve Letter has been sent, if further unauthorised absences trigger the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period - a penalty notice would be considered.

95% – 92.1% - When a child's attendance falls within this range, schools need to take further action as soon as possible. In the first instance, a letter informing parents of their child's attendance. If a further absence occurs parents would be invited to attend a School Attendance Support Meeting, this will be to look at any barriers that may be impacting on attendance. There will be an increased need for an Attendance Support Plan to improve attendance. If attendance with the support of the plan continues to fall and the unauthorised absence continues to rise, then the Notice to Improve letter may be considered to be sent. If unauthorised absence still continues to rise, then a Penalty Notice may be considered (the local authority will consider issuing a fine when the paperwork has been completed online and evidence of what has been tried, to improve attendance and engagement with parents). Children between 95% and 92.1% attendance are at risk of imminent persistent absentee schools need to look at rapid action to improve attendance and work with parents and children to do this

Schools should endeavour to support families and try to engage them to work with the school for the best possible outcomes for their child.

92% - As soon as a child's attendance falls to 92% or below rapid action must be taken to avoid attendance falling further. Children with ongoing unauthorised absences and attendance of 92% or below the previous steps will have been followed and if no improvement has been seen school will invite parents into an Attendance Support Meeting and an Attendance Support Plan will be mandatory. On the plan we may ask for medical evidence and if we do not receive this the absence may remain unauthorised. Unauthorised absence can lead to a fine being issued by the Local Authority.

Home visits for attendance (97% and below) may be undertaken if there are any concerns a letter will be sent to parents with a date and a time and the purpose of the visit. If there has been no communication to school regarding a child's absence, then the school may visit unannounced to ensure the safety of a child.

Any action by the school needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis, as there may be children with an ongoing medical condition that require medical appointments or spells in hospital. Other personal circumstances should also be considered and appropriate and reasonable actions taken by the school.

We must continue to build and maintain positive relations with parents through clear communication. We need to listen and act appropriately to ensure our families receive the necessary support.