Water Meadows Primary School Attendance Policy

Updated July 2026

The Stour Academy Trust

Attendance policy July 2026

A Multi Academy Trust at the forefront of providing a 21st century education for children.
We have a vision for education that gives children the necessary skills to thrive in our modern, 21st century world.

Our pedagogical model combined with the intentional deployment of technology will help us deliver personalised learning. Through the innovative use of digital technology, we will create a level playing field for all children, irrespective of their language skills, reading ability or any other factors that may present learning challenges.

Technology will accelerate our progress but will not be the driver of our vision.
We will develop both the cognitive and social-emotional skills necessary for children to succeed in their personal and professional lives.

There will be no barriers to achievement within our learning community, and our teachers will build strong relationships that facilitate the learning of others.
Traditional classrooms will evolve to allow the vision to be fully embraced. Our enabling environments will be child-centred and designed to allow for flexibility, collaboration and independence. The aim is to shape our environment to better reflect a 21st century workspace that promotes social interaction, communication and self-regulation.

Trust Values

We are:

- Collaborative
- Nurturing
- Inclusive
- Ambitious
- Innovative

Water Meadows School Values

We are:

- Supportive
- Honest
- Inclusive
- Nurturing
- Enabling

Section 1: The importance of school attendance
Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

Section 2: The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education
The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.
This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard.

Section 3: Strategic approach to attendance
The Stour Academy Trust is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities for learning presented to them.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for The Stour Academy Trust leads on the strategic approach to raising attendance in our schools and works closely with school leaders to ensure the school is having impact on children's overall attendance.

The CEO will also work with outside agencies, such as the DfE to ensure that all schools are appropriately trained and working in line with current guidance and expectations.
The Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance at Water Meadows Primary School is Ben Martin, who works closely with the School Improvement Partner, CEO and wider team.

Strategy for data
As poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early intervention is crucial. The key to this is regular data analysis to both identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them.
To achieve this all we will:

- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and parents
- Use this analysis to provide other leaders (including any special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) with the information they need to intervene and support attendance
- Identify the pupils who need support and focus staff efforts on developing targeted actions for those cases.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This should include analysis of pupils and cohorts and identifying patterns in uses of certain codes, days of poor attendance and where appropriate, subjects which have low lesson attendance.
- Benchmark our attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data. This may, for example, include pupils in a year group with higher-than-average absence or for pupils eligible for free school meals if their attendance falls behind that of their more advantaged peers.
- Monitor in the data the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings will then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.

Section 4: School staff, roles, and responsibilities

Senior Attendance Champion
In line with statutory guidance, Water Meadows Primary School has a designated Senior Attendance Champion responsible for leading and coordinating attendance improvement throughout the school.

The Senior Attendance Champion is:
Mr Ben Martin – Headteacher

The Senior Attendance Champion works alongside:

- Parent Support Advisor
- School Administrative Team
- Class Teachers
- SENDCo
- Safeguarding Team
- Local Authority Attendance Services

to promote excellent attendance and provide support to pupils and families where attendance concerns arise

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole Trust on at least a termly basis, through the CEO's termly report. The Board of Directors also maintains responsibility for the adoption of this policy.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO will monitor school attendance regularly to report to the Board of Directors and to ensure schools are receiving the appropriate support and challenge regarding attendance.

The CEO will keep abreast of changes to statutory guidance and signpost schools to the appropriate external partners to collaborate where necessary.

Where there are, or have been, significant concerns regarding school attendance, the CEO will chair a termly strategy meeting at the school to look at data, trends and initiatives in place. Special consideration will be given to any children deemed severely absent.

Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher responsibilities include:

- Raising attendance and reducing persistent absence
- Forming relationships with parents and working collaboratively to raise attendance
- Safeguarding children who are not regularly attending school or not attending full time
- Implementing this policy at school level
- Undertaking the monitoring of school-level absence data and reporting it to Trust leaders
- Use data to look for trends and patterns and plan accordingly to raise attendance

Parent Support Advisor responsibilities include:

- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher or SLT Attendance Lead
- Works with school liaison officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss low level or regular attendance issues
- Advises the Head Teacher or SLT Lead when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Advises Head Teacher or SLT Lead regarding children missing in education
- Signpost families to appropriate support outside of school
- Ensure that all children who are severely absent have a service (or offer of service) available to them

Class Teacher responsibilities include:

- Submitting attendance registers on a daily basis in a timely manner
- Building relationships with pupils so they feel confident to attend school
- Adapting classroom routines and procedures to support children suffering school-based anxiety
- Undertaking calls in the afternoon to parents of pupils who did not attend school during that day. This is a supportive call to check on pupil wellbeing not to raise attendance concerns

Admin Staff responsibilities include:

- Chasing attendance registers not submitted in a timely manner

- Undertaking first day calling responsibilities for any unexplained absences where a parent has not contacted the school first
- Amending absence coding when communication from parents received
- Calling parents to ascertain the reason for absence when a parent has not made contact (first day calling).
- Ensuring communication with school leaders where there are concerns about a child who is not in school so safeguarding checks can be completed
- Working with school leaders to ensure any absence is coded correctly to ensure data analysis is reflective of the absence and provides accurate data

Parent / Carer responsibilities include:

- Ensuring children in their care attend school regularly and arrive punctually
- Providing school with an appropriate reason for child(ren)'s absences on a daily basis. **Should we not receive communication from you or be able to contact you, we will undertake a home visit for safeguarding reasons.**

Section 5: Day to day processes for managing attendance

Absence Procedures

Parents are encouraged to use the In-App message feature in the Arbor Parent Portal/Arbor App. Alternatively, parents can also contact the school by emailing us directly at watermeadows@stouracademytrust.org.uk or calling us on 01227 710414.
We monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

If a child is absent from school, the parent/carer must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before 9.00 a.m. The school office line has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 9.00 a.m.
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence

If a child is absent, we will:

- Telephone you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it is your responsibility to contact us
- If we are unable to contact parents/carers by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made in the interests of safeguarding.
- If there is a significant concern, we may contact the Police to request a safeguarding welfare check.
- If we are unable to establish contact with parents/carers or confirm a child's whereabouts, we may make a referral to the Local Authority earlier than 10 school days where there are safeguarding concerns. Where a child has been absent for 10 school days without contact or satisfactory explanation, the school will follow local Children Missing Education procedures.
- If absence continues, we will:
- Write to you if your child's attendance is below 90%, or where punctuality is a concern.

- Invite you into school to meet with the Attendance Lead, Headteacher and/or the Pastoral Support Advisor to discuss the situation
- Create a personalised action/support plan to address any barriers to attendance if required
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services if appropriate
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for statutory intervention if attendance deteriorates following the above actions

Arriving Late to School
The morning register is taken at 8:45am.

Pupils arriving after 8:45am, but before the register closes at 9:15am, will be recorded as late using attendance code L.

Pupils arriving after 9:15am will be recorded using attendance code U (late after register closes), unless another authorised absence code is more appropriate.

Persistent lateness is disruptive to learning and can have a significant impact on educational progress. Frequent lateness will be monitored, and parents/carers may be invited to attend a meeting to discuss support and improvement strategies.

Repeated unauthorised lateness may result in referral to the Local Authority and could contribute towards legal intervention where appropriate.

The afternoon register will also be taken at the same time for all pupils at 12.55pm. Pupils are expected to be present for both the morning and afternoon sessions unless an authorised reason for absence applies.

Arriving to school
There is no supervision before school in the playgrounds and parents and pupils should not enter the school premises before the gates open at 8.30 a.m., unless accessing Breakfast Club. There is a Breakfast Club available for those parents/carers who wish to use it. The club opens at 7.30 a.m. and costs £2.80 per daily session (including breakfast) or if arriving to Breakfast Club between 8.15 a.m. and 8.30 a.m., £1. This must be booked in advance.
Frequent lateness after the register has closed will be discussed with parents/carers and could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice.

Illness and Medical Evidence

The school will authorise absences due to illness where satisfied that the child is genuinely unable to attend.

The school will not routinely request medical evidence and does not operate a blanket policy requiring medical evidence after a set number of days of absence.

However, where there is a genuine and reasonable concern regarding the authenticity of an illness absence, or where illness absence becomes prolonged, frequent or repeated, the school may request reasonable evidence to help determine the most appropriate absence code and identify any support required.

Evidence may include:

- Appointment confirmations
- Prescriptions
- Medication labels
- Hospital letters
- Medical correspondence
- Other evidence considered appropriate by the school

The school will be flexible regarding the form of evidence provided and will consider individual circumstances in each case.

Planned absence

Medical and dental appointments should be made outside school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents/carers should notify the school in advance and provide evidence of the appointment if requested. The school may authorise the absence where it is satisfied that the appointment is necessary and cannot reasonably take place outside the school day. Pupils should only be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Full-Day Attendance

All pupils are expected to attend school every day that the school is open and for the full duration of the school day.

Regular attendance means attending all sessions, arriving on time and remaining in school until the end of the school day unless there is a statutory reason for absence.

Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school before the end of the school day.

Requests for early collection will only be authorised where there is a genuine and unavoidable reason, such as:

- A medical or dental appointment
- A family emergency
- An exceptional circumstance agreed by the Headteacher

Early collection for convenience, transport arrangements, social events, family visits or non-urgent matters will not normally be authorised.

Where early collection is unavoidable, pupils should be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary, and parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence of the reason for absence.

Section 6: Promoting and incentivising attendance

At Water Meadows, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for our pupils and parents for attendance and punctuality. It is a central part of our school's vision, values and ethos. We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and well-being.

We want to work in partnership with parents and pupils to ensure every child is given full access to their right to education and can fulfil their potential. We celebrate good attendance and punctuality and will not accept barriers to the child receiving a high-quality education.

To help us all focus on this, we will:

- Give parents details on attendance on newsletters
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance
- Report to parents regularly on attendance
- Contact parents if there are concerns regarding attendance so we can work together to make improvements

Section 7: Granting leaves of absence

Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. We will consider each application individually considering specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Parents must submit written requests for leave of absence at least 7 days before the absence would commence.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. As headteachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances **it is very unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.**

Exceptional circumstances

- Absence for a bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance for the funeral service only, but not usually for extended leave.
- Absences for important religious observances are often considered for the ceremony and travelling time, but not for extended leave. This is intended for one-off situations rather than regular or recurring events.
- Requests linked to serious illness or bereavement will be considered sensitively and on an individual basis. Where leave is granted, the Headteacher will determine the appropriate length of absence based on the specific circumstances.

Graduated Response to Attendance Concerns

Water Meadows Primary School adopts a graduated approach to attendance support.

Stage 1 – Universal Attendance Support

All pupils benefit from:

- High expectations for attendance
- Positive attendance promotion
- Regular attendance monitoring

- Clear communication with families

Stage 2 – Early Intervention
Where attendance begins to decline, the school may:
- Contact parents/carers
- Discuss concerns with pupils
- Monitor attendance more closely
- Offer early support and advice

Stage 3 – Targeted Support
Where attendance continues to decline, the school may:
- Hold attendance meetings
- Create an attendance action plan
- Identify barriers to attendance
- Signpost to support services
- Consider Early Help involvement

Stage 4 – Formal Support
Where attendance remains a concern, support may be formalised through:
- Attendance contracts
- Notices to Improve
- Multi-agency support
- Local Authority involvement

Stage 5 – Legal Intervention
Where support has not been successful, or where support would not be appropriate in the circumstances, legal interventions may be considered in partnership with the Local Authority. These may include:
- Penalty Notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Attendance prosecution

The school will always seek to work in partnership with families and remove barriers to attendance wherever possible

Fixed Penalty Notices
Penalty notices are issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or, in certain cases, at a place where alternative provision is provided. Penalty notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes and that absence(s) constitutes an offence. A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).
The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The national threshold for considering a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. This may include unauthorised holiday absence,

unauthorised absence, late arrival after the register has closed, or a combination of these. The 10-school-week period may span different terms or school years.

Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time).
A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The school must have notified the parents of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place. This type of penalty notice is not included in the National Framework and therefore not subject to the same considerations about support being provided or count towards the limit as part of the escalation process in the case of repeat offences for non-attendance.

When a school becomes aware that the threshold has been met, they are expected to make the following considerations to decide whether to issue a penalty notice in each individual case:

Is support appropriate in this case?

- If yes, schools are expected to continue with the existing support without a penalty notice or issue a Notice to Improve if that support is not working or is not being engaged with. A penalty notice can be issued if this has not worked.
- If no, for example a holiday in term time, a penalty notice should be issued subject to the other conditions below.

- Is a penalty notice the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this particular family or would further support or one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?

- Is issuing a penalty notice in this case appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as where a pupil has a disability?

If the answer to those questions is yes, then a penalty notice should be issued. If not, another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

Notices to improve

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have **not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked**, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate and an authorised officer can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

The Notice to Improve is expected to include:

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

Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended. For example, a Notice to Improve stated there should be no further unauthorised absences in a 6-week period but the pupil is absent for unauthorised reasons in the first week. The parent should be informed before a penalty notice is issued if it is before the end of the improvement period.

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

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Once 3 years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases, it would not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behaviour.

For the purpose of the escalation process, previous penalty notices include those not paid (including where prosecution was taken forward and the parent pleaded or was found guilty) but not those which were withdrawn.

In cases where a pupil has moved school or local authority area in the previous 3 years an additional check should be made to try and ascertain whether previous penalty notices have been

issued to the parent in respect of the pupil. Where the pupil's previous school was in the same local authority area this check will be simple. If the pupil has moved between local authorities in the previous 3 years and the previous local authority(ies) is known they should be contacted to check whether a penalty notice has been issued to that parent for that pupil in the previous 3 years. These checks can be made by the school and/or local authority depending on the agreed local process. In cases where the previous local authority is not known or the information cannot be, or is not, provided by the previous local authority, it should be assumed that the parent has not previously received a penalty notice and the escalation process started as a new case.

Section 8: Strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absences

Persistent absence (10% or more of the school year) may be a cause for concern and may result in a referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer. In some cases, the School Liaison Officer may even consider prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

The School Leaders will discuss all children who are persistently absent at attendance meetings and contact parents/carers to discuss how their child's attendance will be improved. This may require an attendance action plan/agreement to be formed with parents/carers.

An individual support plan to reduce absence should be in place for all severely absent pupils.

Severe Absence

A pupil who misses 50% or more of available sessions is categorised as severely absent. Severely absent pupils will receive the highest level of attendance support.
The school will work with:

- Parents/carers
- Early Help services
- Social Care
- Health professionals
- The Local Authority Attendance Team

to understand and remove barriers to attendance.

Where safeguarding concerns are identified, attendance concerns may form part of wider safeguarding planning and intervention.

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance/Punctuality

- 96 - 100% attendance – attendance will be monitored routinely. Concerns may still be followed up where patterns of absence emerge.
- 94 - 96% attendance - the class teacher will notify the Attendance Team of concerns. Parents/carers may be contacted if appropriate.
- 90 – 94% attendance – school intervention letters/meeting with parents/carers may take place.
- Attendance below 90% - categorised as 'Persistent Absence.' If there are unauthorised absences, the school will make a referral to the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service using the Digital Front Door. If it is not clear a referral to the service is appropriate, the school will consult with the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for advice.

- For the cases that require intensive family support, the school/parent will consider Early Help family support. See EHPS-Leaflet-for-Families.pdf (kelsi.org.uk) for further details.

Pupils with medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils will be the same as they are for any other pupil. That said, in working with their parents/carers to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these pupils face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help all children access their full-time education.

In all cases, we will be sensitive and avoid stigmatising pupils and parents/carers and will talk to pupils and parents/carers to help us to understand how they feel and what they think would help improve their attendance to develop individual approaches that meet an individual pupil's specific needs.

This may include:

- Having sensitive conversations and developing good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions. For example, making reasonable adjustments where a pupil has a disability or putting in place an individual healthcare plan where needed.
- Considering whether additional support from external partners (including the local authority or health services) would be appropriate, making referrals in a timely manner and working together with those services to deliver any subsequent support.
- Working with parents/carers 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.
- Establishing strategies for removing the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements.
- Ensuring 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 anxiety about school attendance.
- Pupils with long term illnesses or other health needs may need additional support to continue their education, such as alternative provision provided by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
- Fixed penalty notices where support has not worked or parents have not engaged

Remote education will not normally be used as an alternative to attendance at school. Where remote education is considered, it will only be used as a last resort, where reasonable adjustments have been considered, and as part of a wider support or reintegration plan. Pupils receiving remote education while absent from school will still be recorded using the appropriate absence code.

Young Carers

The school recognises that some pupils may have caring responsibilities at home which can affect their attendance, punctuality and wellbeing.

Where a pupil is identified as a young carer, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil and their family to understand any barriers to attendance and identify appropriate support. Where necessary, the school may work with Early Help services, local authority partners and other agencies to ensure the pupil receives appropriate support and can access their education successfully.

Attendance concerns relating to young carers will always be considered sensitively and in the wider context of the child's individual circumstances.

Section 9: Part-time timetables

We follow KCC's Best Practice Guidance for Schools on the Use of Reduced Timetable

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

Part-time timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances and must:

- Have parental agreement
- Be time limited
- Form part of a wider support or reintegration plan
- Be reviewed regularly
- Have a clear intended outcome

A part-time timetable will never be used as a behaviour management tool.

Attendance associated with an agreed temporary part-time timetable will be recorded using the appropriate attendance code in accordance with DfE guidance, normally Code C2 for compulsory school-age pupils.

Information Sharing and Statutory Returns

The school is required to share attendance information and other pupil data with the Local Authority and the Department for Education in accordance with statutory requirements.

This may include:

- Attendance returns
- New pupil returns
- Deletion returns
- Children Missing Education notifications
- Sickness returns where a pupil is expected to miss 15 days or more due to illness

The school will ensure information is shared lawfully and in accordance with data protection legislation.

Attendance and admission registers will be kept electronically. Any amendments to registers will show the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of the amendment and the person who made it, in line with statutory requirements.

Section 10: Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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**
- **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**
- **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the **school census**, which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- **The Equality Act 2010** and Rights of the Child
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** (DfE, July 2026)

Annex A: DfE Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance, July 2026

All Pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Board of Directors is expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness). Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance. Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents/carers understand. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers. Have robust daily processes to follow up absence. Have a dedicated senior leader with overall	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services. Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance. Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support

	responsibility for championing and improving attendance.		with queries and advice. Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Board of Directors is expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance. Work with each identified pupil and their parents/carers to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. Act as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that that the school is best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Hold a termly conversation with every school, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so. Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Board of Directors is expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including and parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absence and: Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners. Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents/carers and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continued support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including parenting contracts and education supervision orders. Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Board of Directors is expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and: Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and: All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision. Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Board of Directors is expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents/carers to maximise attendance. Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed. Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special education need, educational psychologists and mental health services to ensure joined up support for families. Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Board of Directors is expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area. Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children. Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.

Annex B: Standard coding used to record absences

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

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity - Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Sheffield Inclusion Centre - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Chapel House / Becton Outreach / CAMHS Lodges - Hospital education - Education at a secure / residential site - Off-site direction / managed move	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend

Code	Meaning	Type
The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence

Annex C: Example of Individual Support Plan for Attendance (Child)

My School Attendance Support Plan	
Name:	**Date:**
At school these things can make me feel upset:	
My key adult(s) in school is/are:	
When I can speak to my key adult(s): **Where I can speak to my key adult(s):**	
Until _____ my return to school plan includes the following changes to my attendance:	
(Identify any changes to days or time they come in)	
Changes to my timetable include:	
(Identify any changes needed and what should happen/ where they should go instead)	
Any other changes include:	
Identify any other changes to routines, (break, lunch times, changes between lessons etc.) classroom expectations (not expected to read aloud, work in pairs etc.) or homework.	

When I start to get worried or upset, I notice these things about myself:
When I start to get worried or upset, others notice these things about me:
Things I can do to make myself feel better when I'm at school:
Things that other people (staff and friends) can do to help me feel better when I'm at school:
Things that my family can do to support me to attend school:

Places in the school I can go to where I feel safe and supported:
This plan will be reviewed regularly so that it remains helpful.
Review date:

My signature	Key adult's signature	Parent signature

Other people who have access to the plan are:

Annex D: Example of Attendance Plan/Agreement (Parents)

ATTENDANCE PLAN FOR SEVERE OR PERSISTENT ABSENCE

Name: **Year Group**: **Date Plan Drawn Up:** **Those Present:**	
Date of Referral: **Attendance at Referral:** **Previous Term's Attendance:** **AGREED TARGETS FOR THE NEXT 6 WEEKS:**	
Pupil:	To get up when called for school each day To have school bag prepared the night before To have done homework To have right equipment for the day
Parent/Social worker or Carer:	To book an appointment to take xxxxx to the Doctors To continue to telephone the school when xxxxx is not well enough to come to school To ensure xxxxx has everything needed for school the night before To set aside time in the evening to discuss the school day and anxieties
School:	**PSA:** To continue to telephone carer or social worker/Parent if xxxxx doesn't arrive at school. To continue to monitor the situation on a daily basis and speak to xxxxx on her return to school if she has been absent. **Attendance Lead:** To continue to meet with xxxxx weekly and set a review date with the Class Teacher as soon as possible to discuss xxxxx's academic progress.
Other Agency:	
Agreed Targets:	No unauthorised absence for the next 6 weeks Xxxxx to attend all lessons when in school No more than 6 authorised absences over the next 6 week period Xxxxx to contact xxxxxx if she has any issues that need to be addressed in school

USEFUL LINKS

Other relevant legislation and guidance

Education Act 2002 (legislation.gov.uk)
Children Act 1989 (legislation.gov.uk)
Children missing education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Elective home education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Alternative provision - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Providing remote education: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)