



# Attendance policy

effective 19th August 2024

Grace Academy Darlaston

DRAFT

**Approved by:**

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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:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority

- Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

### **3.2 The Principal**

The Principal is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Associate Vice Principal and Attendance Team to be able to do so (see appendix 2 for more information)
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Sophie Chance and can be contacted via 0121 568 3300 or [sophiechance@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk](mailto:sophiechance@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk)

### 3.4 The attendance team

The school attendance team (made up of the Attendance Administrator and Attendance Manager) are responsible for:

#### Attendance Administrator

- Monitoring and analysing daily, weekly, and termly attendance data (see section 7)
- First point of contact for daily absences, conversing with parents/carers and encouraging attendance and making contact with parents/carers where absences have not been reported
- Contacting parents/carers of short-term absentees to obtain updates and encourage attendance
- Provide daily attendance data to key staff
- Complete home visits as directed by Attendance Manager
- Identify absences of vulnerable students as a priority on a daily basis
- Pursuing any gaps in the register throughout the day
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Principal
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Making internal referrals for safeguarding, wellbeing or other student-specific concerns
- Monitor punctuality on a daily basis and identify trends on specific days, reporting back to Attendance Manager and the leadership team

The attendance officer is Rebecca Walmsley and can be contacted via [rebeccawalmsley@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk](mailto:rebeccawalmsley@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk)

#### Attendance Manager

- Line Management of Attendance Administrator

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement, leading on referrals for intervention
- Ensure adequate interventions in place to support students' positive attendance
- Communicating with parents/carers and managing letters to challenge unexplained and/or unauthorised absences or low cumulative attendance
- Liaison with safeguarding, pastoral and other internal teams to provide holistic support for students
- Liaison with external agencies to include Early Help teams, EWO teams, locality, Police and other key stakeholders
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Principal
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Principal/Associate Vice Principal (authorised by the Principal) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance manager is Lindsay East and can be contacted via [lindsayeast@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk](mailto:lindsayeast@darlaston.graceacademy.org.uk)

### 3.5 Class Teachers and Form Tutors

Class teachers and form tutors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information on Go4Schools, or a paper/email copy to the attendance team, in case of technical difficulties.

#### Class Teachers

- Class teachers must ensure they take a register at the start of every lesson accurately.
- Class teachers should report unexpected student absences as a priority through the agreed systems
- Class teachers will ensure students' planners are stamped appropriately at the end of all lesson, issuing late detentions where necessary
- Class teachers will report unexpected lesson absences through agreed methods for students to be located
- Class teachers will welcome students who have been recently absent and ensure they have the resources to catch up on missed work
- Class teachers will ensure their classroom environment is welcoming and positive in line with the Academy culture of belonging

#### Form Tutors

- Form tutors must ensure they take a register during AM and PM form time accurately.
- Form tutor will have positive and encouraging conversations with students on a daily basis to encourage positive attendance
- Where students have been absent, form tutors will have a positive conversation to welcome the student, reporting anything of concern
- Form tutors will ensure their form group have their attendance written in planners on a weekly basis
- Form tutor will celebrate weekly attendance successes and provide rewards for students with positive attendance
- Form tutors will ensure students' planners are stamped appropriately during AM and PM form time, issuing late detentions where necessary

Note: Where a student is out of lesson for an agreed purpose, the member of staff responsible for the student at that time must ensure that the register is updated with the appropriate alias code, adding details of times or otherwise important information to the notes, if appropriate.

**Failure to maintain accurate and timely records may be responded to in line with Disciplinary Procedures.**

### 3.6 Other Key Staff

#### School administration staff will:

- Ensure calls regarding attendance are forwarded to the attendance team
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the pastoral, safeguarding or attendance team, where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance and support in the Academy
- Ensure students arriving late are registered on Go4Schools, noting the time and the reason

#### Support Staff and Pastoral staff:

- Ensure registers are accurately updated, noting the time and location if a student is not in lessons
- Use appropriate alias codes to mark accurately the location of a student in an intervention or otherwise
- Encourage positive attendance, complete appropriate referrals for support and support in line with the Academy's culture of belonging
- Welcome students on arrival to the Academy, providing appropriate support for a successful day

### 3.7 Parents/Carers

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

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

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every school day and timetabled lesson on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with up to date contact details for parents/carers
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the pastoral team, who can be contacted via 0121 568 3300.
- Take family holidays during school breaks to ensure there is no loss of learning during term time
- Report planned absences in advance through the Academy's request for absence form

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every school day and every timetabled session, on time
- Attend any set detentions for lateness

## 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 8.30am and ends at 3.00pm**

**Pupils must arrive in school from 8.20am on each school day.**

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at 13.55pm.

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

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

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

Attending a pre-planned medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Any other planned absences (e.g. weddings, funerals) will require an absence form to be completed ([click here](#)) and share with the attendance team in advance of the absence. It is the Principal's discretion as to whether the absence would be authorised or not. Planned holidays will not be authorised.

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

### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code, and issued a 10 minute detention on the same day
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code and issued a detention
- Regular lateness will incur an additional detention or consequence

### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a home visit, or seek out support from the local authority or emergency services, where appropriate
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the Academy may work with the authority to issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention.

### 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels through reports, conversations and letters.

Should a parent have concerns about their child's attendance, the attendance team will make an appointment to discuss this accordingly.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

The Principal 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 Principal's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as things that are unexpected, unavoidable and outside of your control, leading to the necessity for absence.

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

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

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website. The Principal may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. Only the day of the actual religious observance will be authorised and students are encouraged to return to the Academy the next school day.
- 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 physical transport 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 Principal (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. (See Appendix 2)

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider (with the support of other agencies) the individual case, including:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Notices to improve

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

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

They will include:

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

- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Grace Academy Darlaston, we pride ourselves on rewarding students for demonstrating the Academy's core values and overcoming barriers. Our rewards programme is broad to ensure all students can access rewards for their character, progress attendance and more. Rewards for attendance include (although not an exhaustive list):

- Weekly attendance celebrations during assembly, celebrating best attendance for form groups and individuals with no unauthorised absences
- Weekly form time attendance focus, rewarding students with a 100% attendance card on a weekly basis to enter themselves into a prize draw
- Half termly attendance rewards – these vary but may include exclusive access to rewards events or prizes
- Regular parent/carer prize draw for students with zero unauthorised absences
- Smaller focus groups and one-to-one support as part of our promotion to improve and maintain good attendance
- Regular 'spot prizes' to recognise students with consistently good attendance or clear improvements in attendance
- Parent/carer meetings and contracts

### **Thresholds for Attendance\*:**

100% - Students with 100% attendance will be regularly rewarded

95% - This is the target for all students to strive towards

85-95% - Here, students and parents/carers may receive an initial letter, or the offer for support to work towards the Academy's 95% target. Anything below 90% is identified as 'persistent absence'

60-85% - Students are 'persistently absent' and will receive support to improve their attendance and parents/carers will be contacted

50-60% - Students are at risk of becoming 'severely absent'. Parents/carers will receive letters of support/concern, students will be supported to improve their attendance (possibly on a one to one basis) and the local authority may become involved

Below 50% - This is seen as 'severe absence' and a higher level of support and intervention will be put in place to ensure swift improvement to attendance

\*Note: We recognise how students' attendance is more than a number, therefore, these thresholds are a guide and students' needs and support will be identified on a case-by-case basis, where appropriate.

Additionally, we work with and are guided by the local authority to support parents and carers in encouraging their child(ren) to attend the Academy. We carry out phone calls and home visits to offer our support during absences and we offer Early Help / Team around the Family support where appropriate.

## 7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

### 7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

#### **Support and Communication with Families:**

- **Regular Communication:** The SEND, safeguarding, medical and Attendance teams at Grace Academy Darlaston collaborate to ensure regular, open lines of communication with the families of pupils who are absent due to health reasons. This includes scheduled check-ins via phone calls, emails, or virtual meetings to discuss the pupil's well-being and academic progress.
- **Designated Contact:** There may be a designated staff member (e.g., a SENCO, Key worker, pastoral lead, or attendance officer) to act as a point of contact for the family. This person will be responsible

for coordinating support and ensuring that the family is informed about the pupil's educational plan and available resources.

- **Collaborative Planning:** Staff work collaboratively with families to develop a personalised support plan tailored to the pupil's specific needs, ensuring the family's input is valued and considered in decision-making processes.

## 7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

### Adjustments and Flexibility:

- **Flexible Attendance Options:** Where suitable, we consider flexible attendance arrangements to accommodate the pupil's health condition. We encourage and support pupils to access education in person as far as possible. Utilising the school's Hub, we provide additional support to aid in the reintegration of pupils and promote consistent school attendance. The Hub offers a structured, supportive environment to help pupils transition back to regular attendance.
- **Accessibility:** We also ensure that all educational materials are accessible, including providing resources in various formats (e.g., audio, large print, digital) and ensuring physical accessibility to the school environment, if applicable.

### Additional Support and Resources:

- **Mental Health Support:** We can provide access to school-based mental health services, such as mentoring or alternative forms of intervention, and provide referrals to external mental health professionals if needed.
- **Health Care Coordination:** We also collaborate with healthcare providers to align educational plans with medical advice and treatment plans, ensuring that the pupil's health needs are prioritised.
- **Peer Support:** During periods of absence or reintegration, we facilitate peer support programs or buddy systems to help the pupil stay connected with classmates and reduce feelings of isolation.
- **Specialised Interventions:** Upon further assessment, we are able to request targeted interventions such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, or physical therapy for pupils with specific SEND requirements.

### Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan Coordination:

- **Annual Reviews:** In line with statutory requirements, we conduct annual reviews of the EHC plan to assess progress and make necessary adjustments. We ensure that all relevant parties, including the pupil, parents, teachers, and external professionals, are involved in these reviews.
- **Integration with EHC Plan:** The Learning Support team ensure that all adjustments and support measures are in line with the objectives and provisions set out in the pupil's EHC plan. Regularly monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of these measures.
- **Transition Planning:** The SENCO provides support for key transitions, such as moving from primary to secondary school or preparing for post-16 education or employment. Collaboratively, we develop a clear transition plan in collaboration with the pupil, family, and relevant external agencies.

By implementing these strategies, we aim to provide a supportive and inclusive educational environment that accommodates the diverse needs of all pupils, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to succeed despite any health-related challenges.

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

## 7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

After a lengthy period of absence, a collaborative approach will be used to ensure that a student settled back into school life. This will be managed case by case in order to ensure that the right support and process is in place for individuals.

Class teachers will ensure students are welcomed back to their lessons and provided with direction on catching up with their learning.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

On a daily basis, all absences are noted and reported to the leadership team and key members of staff. Any unexplained absences are pursued daily with a focus on vulnerable students to begin with.

Daily attendance figures and reasons for absences are shared with the leadership team and key members of staff and anything of concern is followed up appropriately.

Weekly attendance reports are generated and shared with the leadership team with discussion on any new or pending interventions or student-specific concerns or actions.

Form tutors receive weekly updated of the attendance of their form groups to discuss with their tutees.

Attendance is a standing item for discussion at every meeting with the Governing Body and a report is shared with them by the Attendance Champion/

Attendance is discussed between the Principal and Associate Vice Principal (Attendance Champion) weekly.

The Attendance Manager and Associate Vice Principal (Attendance Champion) meet weekly.

The Attendance Manager and Attendance Administrator meet on a daily basis.

Attendance is shared with pastoral teams during pastoral meetings.

The Attendance Team keep accurate logs and records of periods of absence and students of concern.

Attendance is discussed on a weekly basis with the local authority for escalation.

### **8.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely, according the statutory requirements.

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

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

### **8.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### **8.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

#### **8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

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

#### **9. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Leadership Team. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

#### **10. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

\*Please see our website for all policies

DRAFT



## 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
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
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
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
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

<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	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
<b>Y1</b>	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
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	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
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)

<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	<p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	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
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix 2: attendance codes

Further information on Walsall Council's policies and procedures on attendance can be found on their website: <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-attendance-and-absence>

**From September 2024, the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices will apply.**

Penalty Notice Fines will continue to be issued per parent per child.

For example: 3 Siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

**National Threshold**

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span over different terms and school years.

**1 First Offence**

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term Time Holiday or Irregular School Attendance the Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

**2 Second Offence**  
(within 3 years of the First Offence)

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

(Unpaid Penalty Notice's after 28 days may result in a prosecution)

**3 Third Offence and any further Offences**  
(within 3 years of the First Offence)

The third time that an offence is committed for either a term time holiday and/or Irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued, the case may be proceeded straight to prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure.

If found guilty of the offence of 'failure to secure their child's regular attendance at a school' the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1,000.

 **Walsall Council**

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