



Lantern Lane Primary School

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1. Aims & rationale

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 \(applied from 19 August 2024\)](#), 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 good punctuality when attending school. We are particularly mindful of vulnerable pupils in relation to attendance and punctuality.

Children can only fulfil their full potential by attending school regularly, on time. All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is appropriate for their needs.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and attendance below 96%.
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders do not miss out on learning experiences and opportunities
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

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

All staff are expected to follow our 'Attendance Expectations' (Appendix 6).

3.1 The governing body

The governing body 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 headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy; through termly attendance reports to the SD committee, ongoing monitoring & evaluation from link governors for safeguarding (children absent from/missing education) and attendance (attendance governor).

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher 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 administrative team member (Ellie Harrop) to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

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 & benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff.

Alongside other key pastoral staff, such as SENDCO, ELSA and other key staff, we will:

- Work with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Liaise with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Build close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Create intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Pete Fowlie and can be contacted via 01509 820112 or head@lanternlane.notts.sch.uk

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible:

- for recording attendance accurately for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office promptly after registers close at 8:50am and 12:30 (EYFS-Y4) & 1:30 (Y5/6).
- Promote & reward good attendance at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with the appropriate member of staff on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate with pupils and parents/carers regarding absences and poor punctuality, seeking reasons for absence where necessary.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls and messages from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Contact parents/carers when children are absent and school have not received notification.
- Inform Attendance Champion of any unexplained absences each day
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to a senior leader where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

- Process leave of absence requests and issue fixed penalty notices.

3.7 Parents

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 day on time, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.
- In the event of any absence, call the school and report their child's absence, before 8:30am whenever possible, on the first day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence)
- In the event of a pupil being brought to school or arriving late, take their child to our office and sign in, including a reason for lateness.
- Provide the school with at least 2 emergency contact details for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Follow our procedures for making a leave of absence request during term time.
- Provide evidence to support any absence if requested by school.
- 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 school through the usual channels.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

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 (see Appendix 1), 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:

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

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

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

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:30 (EYFS-Y2) and 1:30 (Y3-6).

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 8:30am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office, who can be contacted via 01509 820112. Parents should contact school each subsequent day of absence.

Lantern Lane Primary School follows the guidelines from the Public Health Agency on 'infection control in schools and other childcare settings' which outlines the recommended period to be kept away from nursery/school. Pupils who are absent for a period of time longer than that recommended may have these additional absences unauthorised.

In order to authorise the absence, we need to know exactly what is wrong with your child. In some circumstances we may request further evidence of a child's illness to allow the absence to be authorised. We reserve the right to seek additional evidence related to the illness if we have any concerns regarding a child's attendance. In fact, it is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services, in order to provide appropriate support to pupils, particularly for long term illness.

The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:

- Attendance is lower than 97%
- There are frequent odd days of absence due to reported illness or an extended period of illness
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated.
- Where there is a particular medical problems and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support.
- When absences occur either side of a school holiday or weekend.

Medical evidence may be in the form of 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. .

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance and provides confirmation 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.

Absence may be authorised for Religious Observance. Lantern Lane Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends. Lantern Lane Primary School follows local guidance to determine whether we are able to authorise an absence linked to a religious observance. In these circumstances, parents and carers should request a leave of absence following the procedure explained in Section 5.

There are other, infrequent, occasions where absences are permitted and coded as 'Authorised Circumstances'. This relates to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, e.g. serious family illness or bereavement. Parents/carers should communicate with school if there are such circumstances. The Head Teacher's decision is final in such matters.

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

It is important that classes make a prompt and effective start to the school day. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. We are unable to take

responsibility for children on the school premises before 8:40am which is the time when all doors to classrooms open. It is very important that children do not play on the play equipment before or after school as there is no supervision at these times.

In the event of a pupil being brought to school late, take their child to our office and sign in, including a reason for lateness. We do insist that if children are late to school, they are accompanied by an adult to complete signing in.

Parents of children being brought to school late on a regular basis (more than x5 times per half term) will receive a letter highlighting our concern and inviting parents to attend a meeting with the Headteacher. The child's punctuality will be closely monitored. Appropriate support will be offered to ensure punctuality improves, this could be; reward charts, support from external agencies, breakfast club, ELSA support. Please see Section 7 and/or Appendix 5 for further information on how we support pupils and families.

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

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am on each school day. If they arrive between 8:50 and 9:20am, the pupil will be marked 'L' in the register. If a pupil is brought to school after 9:20am, they will be marked 'U' in the register.

We reserve the right to request that the local authority issue a penalty notice to parents if their children are brought to school late for 10 separate instances over a period of six school weeks and where these are marked as a "U" in the attendance register.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence & children absent from/missing education

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

- On day 1-2 of any unexplained absence, parents will receive a text message asking them why their child has not been brought to school. If there is no response, parents are contacted via phone and a voicemail left if call is unanswered. On Day 2 of unexplained absence, any additional emergency contacts will be contacted (at least two different contact numbers will be held on file for a child which can be accessed and used by the school in case of an absence/emergency).
- On Day 3 of any unexplained absence, school senior leadership will visit the address of the pupil to check on the pupil's welfare*. Consideration will be given to inform the Local Authority if there are any concerns.
- If a child remains absent from school, no contact has been established after efforts have been made, and we are unable to locate them, we will follow the Nottinghamshire Local Authority Guidance (Appendix 2) and alert Nottinghamshire's CMO swiftly and consider whether a referral to social care is required.
- Ensure all actions taken are logged on CPOMS
- Follow up on any unexplained absences when a child returns to school.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- 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 we may; issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

Please see Appendix 3 for more information.

*The school uses contextual safeguarding information to assess the risk level around any unexplained absence and reserves the right to carry out safe and well checks and home visits as and when appropriate at any point within a period of absence, to locate and establish whereabouts of the child and assess their safety and wellbeing. Consideration will be given to whether there is a need to inform social care/local authority.

Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. All staff are aware that children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines.

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff are made aware of the school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures. Senior and Deputy DSLs will liaise with the Attendance Champion,

to monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children are absent from education, go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Should a child be linked to outside agencies and have a Child Protection Plan the Social Worker will be informed immediately should absence occur.

At all times, school staff will liaise with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Nottinghamshire County Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register and include circumstances where the pupil:

- has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education – this will be communicated with the home elective education team and Nottinghamshire County Council's guidance will be followed.
- does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the children missing officer (CMO) as they have not been registered at a new school

Please see Appendix 2.2 for more information.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Authorised absence

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

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

- Taking part in a regulated performance.
- Attending an interview/examination
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances (a leave of absence with unique and significant emotional, educational and/or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time')

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
 - Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
 - Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
 - Attending provision arranged by the local authority
 - If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Unauthorised absence

Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The Head Teacher reserves the right to declare any absence unauthorised if:

- there is no explanation given;
- the explanation is not reasonable for the absence;
- the school has good reason to doubt the explanation given.

In line with the 1996 Education Act, we expect all children on roll to attend school every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A child's/family member's birthday
- Looking after siblings/family members
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET or other purposes
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school e.g. a cold or feeling tired.
- No medical evidence provided when requested
- Family holiday

5.3 Leave of absence in term time

Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Exceptional circumstances being defined as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. Here are some examples of reasons which would not class as exceptional circumstances:

- Availability of cheaper holidays or desired accommodation
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- Booked by another family member or for the wrong dates.
- Availability of time off work
- Day trips or family time

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised. The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

5.4 Leave of absence requests

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least four weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form, accessible via our website or available from the school office. If school is aware of any language difficulties that may preclude a request form being completed appropriate support will be offered to the parent(s).

Written travel documentation and accommodation details must be supplied before a request can be considered.

Once the decision has been made by the school it cannot be reversed and there is no appeals procedure. The Head Teacher's decision is final.

If the Head Teacher deems that the reasons for the request are exceptional and authorises the absence, a reply confirming that the request has been authorised will be sent to the parent/carer.

If the Head Teacher deems that the reasons are not exceptional and the leave of absence will not be authorised, a reply informing the parents of this decision for each child and warning of the legal implications of the absence been taken will be sent to each parent/carer. If the national threshold has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks), school will consider requesting that the local authority issue a penalty notice.

Instances where parents/carers don't inform school of reason for absence, or give a false reason, can still result in further sanctions being taken if school have reasonable grounds to believe the absence wasn't due to illness/exceptional circumstances.

5.5 Sanctions

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

Penalty notices

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

There is no right of appeal against an Education Penalty Notice once it has been issued correctly and in line with the Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct. Penalty Notice fines can only be withdrawn in specific circumstances as set out within the national regulations and the local code of conduct. If a parent believes that the reason for their child's unauthorised leave of absence from school in term time was not properly understood and that it should have been considered as exceptional by the Head Teacher then the parent/carer should contact the school to discuss the matter and, if still not satisfied, follow the school's complaints procedure. The local authority cannot overturn a Head Teacher's decision to unauthorise a pupil's absence from school during term time.

Requests for penalty notices may be sent to both biological parents of the child (regardless of relationship status, marital status, living arrangements, levels of parental responsibility or contact) & to any adult residing in the child's home who has day to day/regular care of the child.

Please note:

If an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, his/her parent/carer(s) are guilty of an offence. Please also note that if you have more than one child, each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The Local Authority may take formal action against you for failure to comply with the law. Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution, but may not be issued if prosecution is a more appropriate response to the attendance issues.

The Supreme Court in April 2017 clarified the definition of regular attendance to be 'attendance in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school'. Therefore, if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

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 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
- Attendance contracts, notices to improve and other documentation will use the 'Nottinghamshire Improving School Attendance Toolkit' templates.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

6.1 Communication with parents

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels on a termly basis and within end of year reports. Where there has been an attendance/punctuality problem, this will be highlighted in the report.

Prior to children starting school, parents/carers receive an information pack, part of which emphasises the importance of good attendance and punctuality. This is also emphasised at the meeting to which all parents/carers are invited prior to their children joining the school.

Our Home/School Agreements emphasise the need for regular attendance and punctuality.

Early intervention with parents/carers of children causing concern is important so that any problems can be sorted out at an early stage in order that good attendance or punctuality is not compromised.

We will share class level and whole school attendance data regularly in school communications with parents/carers and display this around school.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 96%, a letter is sent to each parent highlighting our concern and offering support. If attendance drops below 90%, parents are asked to attend a meeting in school to discuss barriers to attendance and agree how these can be removed. A voluntary attendance contract may be used.

6.2 Celebrating attendance and punctuality.

We want to reward our children for good attendance and punctuality so that they understand the importance of both taking full advantage of the education on offer to them.

We use a range of strategies to encourage and reward good attendance and punctuality.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Early intervention with parents/carers of children causing concern is important so that any problems can be sorted out at an early stage in order that good attendance or punctuality is not compromised. We are particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support and reasonable adjustments.

7.1 Pupils absent due to ‘complex barriers’ to attendance - mental or physical ill health, SEND, or after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

We are particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support and reasonable adjustments. This may be in the form of adaptations in the classroom/school environment, specialist support, meet and greet in the morning, involvement of external agencies. We will ensure we maintain regular communication with children and parents/carers to remove barriers to regular attendance.

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly. Doing so may serve to help with the underlying issue.

Where there is an issue around Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) including Anxiety Related Non-attendance (ARNA), we will follow the guidance produced by Nottinghamshire’s Educational Psychology team and resources from Anna Freud Centre for Children & Families to help resolve this.

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.

8. Attendance monitoring

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. In addition, vulnerable pupils will be monitored closely and analysis of attendance for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND included.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request. The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

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.

All data is collected, used and stored in accordance with data protection legislation.

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 and Appendix 5).

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and to the governing board and school leaders (including SENDCO, DSLs and pupil premium leads)
- Discuss attendance as a standing agenda item in staff briefings and SLT meetings.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Benchmark against comparator schools within the local authority, region and nationwide; paying particular attention to pupil cohorts and to groups that face entrenched barriers to attendance (this will be specific to the school's context but may include vulnerable groups such as pupils who have a social worker, are from a background or ethnicity where attendance has historically been low, have a long-term medical condition, have special educational needs or disabilities or are eligible for free school meals)
- 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 and children who are persistently absent will be monitored more frequently and the following procedures will be followed:

Parent/carers will receive warning letters as per the guidance table at Appendix 4 and/or Appendix 5, depending on level of absence. The headteacher will need to consider each individual case of persistent absence as there may be authorised circumstances e.g. long-term medical reasons.

Within Persistent Absence Monitoring, headteachers should be aware of the Local Authority referral criteria:

- 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks

In all engagement with parents/carers, we will:

- 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)

Step 1 - Attendance Meeting (in person or telephone)

When attendance falls below or is close to 90%, parent/carers are contacted to ascertain the reasons for absence and discuss any support that may be offered by the school.

Parent/carers will be informed of procedure going forward should attendance not improve. An attendance target and date for review will be set (between 2 - 6 weeks).

Where attendance meets the agreed target, attendance continues to be monitored without intervention.

Where attendance does not improve, move to Step 2 - Attendance Panel (informal)

Step 2 - Attendance Panel (informal)

- 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

If attendance has fallen below 90% and no improvement is seen or further unauthorised absence is incurred during the period of review, parent/carers will be asked to attend an informal Attendance Panel. At this meeting, the school and the family enter into a (voluntary) Parenting Contract and a further review period is set (minimum 4 weeks)

Where attendance meets the agreed target, attendance continues to be monitored without intervention.

Where attendance does not improve, move to Step 3 - Attendance Panel (formal)

Step 3 - Attendance Panel (formal)

Following the period of review at Step 2, if no improvement is seen or further unauthorised absence is incurred during the period of review, parent/carers will be asked to attend a formal Attendance Panel. At this meeting, the school and the family enter into a (voluntary) Parenting Contract and a further review period is set (minimum 4 weeks).

Where attendance meets the agreed target, attendance continues to be monitored.

Where attendance does not improve, the family should be reported to the penalty notice team at the Local Authority. From this point forward, Education Welfare will be involved with the family and will advise/ with the school to improve attendance.

At Step 3, the family are informed of proceedings going forward which may include penalty notice or prosecution.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, and when guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, by the Headteacher, At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

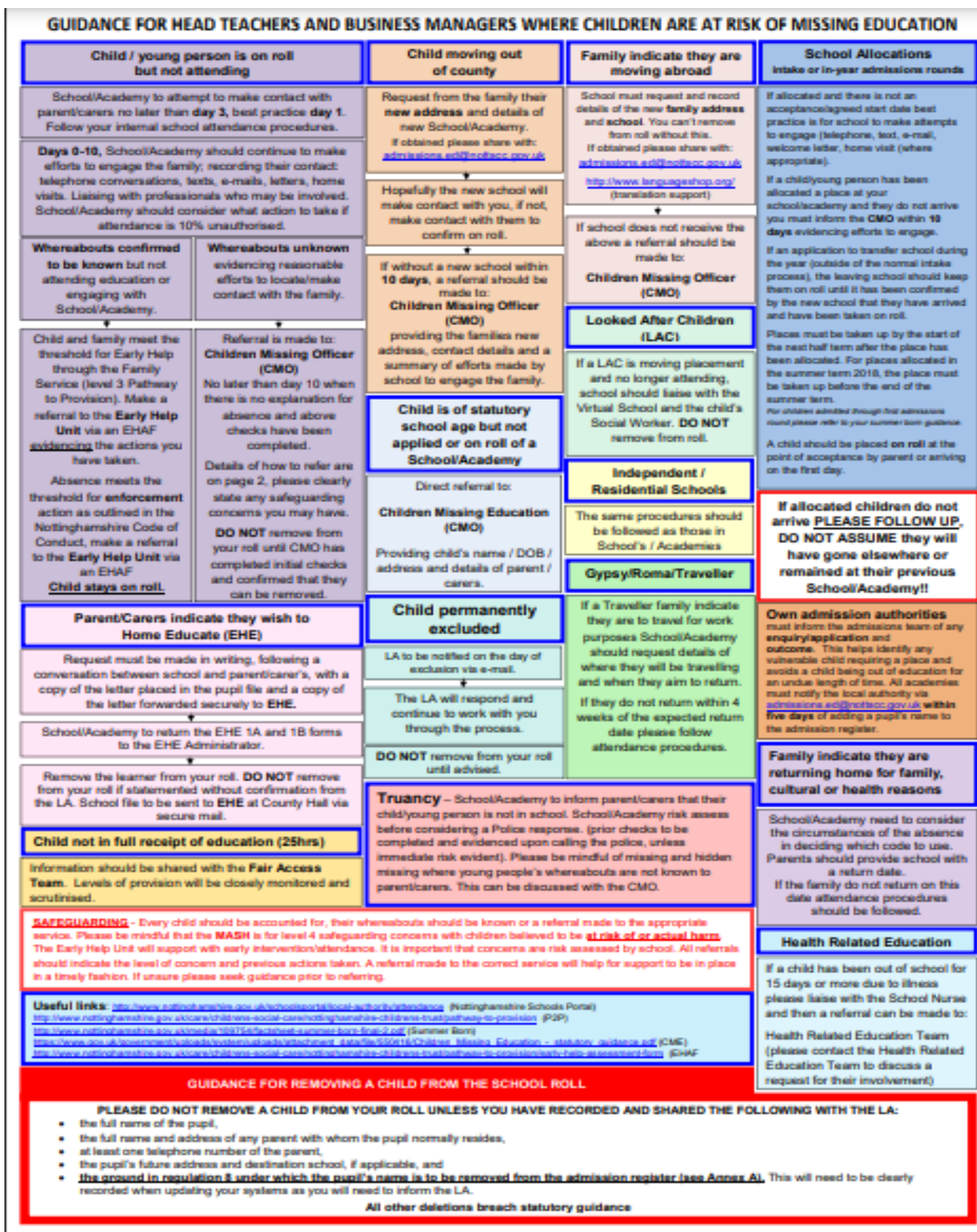
The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
l	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention

		- Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or - Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2.1: Nottinghamshire Local Authority Guidance



Appendix 2.2: Nottinghamshire Local Authority Guidance

What is the CME Team?

The Children Missing in Education Team will:

- Receive and process referrals from an individual and/or agency
- Track and monitor Nottinghamshire children who are missing, or at risk of missing, education
- Track and monitor children and young people who leave the county without a forwarding school
- Refer onto other services as appropriate e.g. Children's Social Care
- Steps to take when referring a child/young person to Child Missing In Education Team.
- Do school have safeguarding concerns? If so, please provide details and contact children's social care if urgent.
- When was the last day the child/young person was in school?
- Have all emergency contacts been exhausted? - addresses, telephone numbers (call / text), e-mail addresses of parents/carers, relatives, friends, work contacts, extended family (abroad if available)
- Have you completed checks with known services? Is the young person open to: CSC, TSS, SEN, Health/School Nurse, School Admissions, CAFCASS
- Are there known siblings/family members attending another school?
- Have friends in school seen or heard from the young person? (speak to pupils discreetly, consider accessing social media)
- Home visits:
 - check the property for any signs of life
 - leave a note explaining why you are trying to make contact, what your expectations of them are, what actions will be taken should they not make contact
 - visit during different times of the day
 - have neighbours seen or heard from the family?

Home Visits

Home visits will allow you to gain a sense as to whether the family are still living in Nottinghamshire, and if this is an attendance issue or child missing education in that we do not know where the family are. Dependent on how well you know the family this could be completed by a door knock, explaining that you are concerned that the young person is not attending school or if unanswered looking for signs of life, does it appear like the family are still resident? A colleague passing by the property on their way home from work could look for signs of life. A visit can be done after you have exhausted all the emergency telephone contacts, written to the family etc. – but an early visit may resolve the issue. If school do not wish to complete a home visit one can be purchased through Targeted Support for £50. Please contact your linked Case Manager.

In the event a child/young person has moved out of county and we do not have a new school to forward the pupil file to.

If a family has moved out of the area school should request from parent/carers the name of the child's new school and new family address. If a school place is not yet obtained please request the address and share this with CMO who will liaise with colleagues in the area who will confirm local applications or arrange a visit to discuss the young person's education whilst in their area. Once confirmed they are known to the new area they become the responsibility of the new LA closing all involvement for Notts. The pupil file can be transferred once a new school is identified.

In the event a child is allocated a place at the school and does not arrive.

If a child has been allocated a place at your school and they do not arrive as expected they must be placed on the register from the expected date, please follow your attendance procedures. It is important that these children do not fall through the net. Be mindful of any language barriers.

In the event that a child is leaving my school and moving abroad.

For children who move abroad, CME would as a minimum, request the address that the child would be living at along with the school they will be attending, without this a referral would need to be made to CMO – we can't record "moved abroad", "Poland" etc. without clear confirmation.

If there were safeguarding concerns school would need to raise them without delay. School would need to consider the reason for the move i.e. is it a planned move? Is it work related? Are there known family abroad? Have parents been open and informative? Have peers spoken to the child via social media since moving abroad etc. (discreetly).

School should request in writing from parents the details of the new address and name of school etc. (school will hopefully have sufficient contact details other than just mum and dad's phone numbers, i.e. friends/family in the UK, e-mail addresses, work contacts etc.)

If there are no safeguarding concerns and school have the above information the pupil file should remain with the UK school. A copy of the most recent reports would be provided to

parents to give to the new school. Where possible we would ask school to make every effort to confirm the young person's attendance at their new school (there is usually a colleague who can speak English), but we would need to be mindful of how we do this (usually via telephone), e-mail would not be secure to share confidential information.

If a young person is open to a social worker or attending a refuge - attendance procedures.

It is important that school have a good relationship with social workers, liaising / sharing information accordingly, but continue to follow internal attendance procedures, school should not rely on the child's social worker to inform CMO etc.

When can a young person be removed from roll.

Children remain on the school roll until their new school is confirmed or confirmation is received from CMO that the child/young person is known to another local authority with their CME team taking responsibility for the case. This will ensure that the young person does not slip between services/authorities. Do not phone admissions teams across the country waiting for children to arrive in a school. If a child has moved within Nottinghamshire and is living outside of a reasonable distance to travel to their previous school this should be communicated to the CMO.

Appendix 3: Absence from school procedure

Absence	Contact with parent/carer	Action	Letter / Guidance
1st Day Absence	✓	Absence recorded appropriately	Absence Codes
	x	am: Text message requesting reason for absence pm: If no response, telephone call to family School may decide a home visit is appropriate.	
2nd Day Absence	✓	Absence recorded appropriately	
	x	Call requesting reason for absence. Call emergency contacts. Inform SLT. <i>Consider</i> a home visit.	
3rd Day Absence	✓	Absence recorded appropriately - phone call to discuss predicted length of absence.	
	x	Call requesting reason for absence. Call emergency contacts. Inform SLT. Complete home visit.	
4th Day of Absence	x	Call requesting reason for absence. Call emergency contacts. Inform Senior Leadership Team. Complete home visit.	
5th Day of Absence	x	Refer to Senior Leadership Team: Admin to phone parent/carers to discuss predicted length of absence. Referral to Nottinghamshire's CMO made and consider whether a referral to social care is required.	
If at any point in the monitoring procedures, the admin team should be concerned about a child's welfare/absence, this should be raised with a DSL/Attendance Champion using CPOMS			

Appendix 4: Reducing persistent absenteeism

Absence %	Autumn	Spring	Summer
100%	School rewards criteria	School rewards criteria	School rewards criteria
96% - 99%			
90% - 95%	Warning letter (at risk) Shared during Parents/Carers Evening Continue to monitor	Warning letter (at risk) Informal meeting Shared during Parents/Carers Evening Continue to monitor	Warning letter (at risk) Informal meeting Concern recorded in school report Continue to monitor
< 90%	Warning letter (PA) Informal / Formal Attendance Panel Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.* SLT informed of all absences. Shared during Parents/Carers Evening	Warning letter (PA) Informal / Formal Attendance Panel Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.* SLT informed of all absences. Shared during Parents/Carers Evening	Warning letter (PA). Informal / Formal Attendance Panel Monitor for 2 – 6 weeks.* SLT informed of all absences. Concern recorded in school report
If at any point in the monitoring procedures, the admin team should be concerned about a child's welfare/absence, this should be raised with a DSL/Attendance Champion using CPOMS. * Where attendance does not improve, the family should be reported to the penalty notice team at the Local Authority. From this point forward, Education Welfare will be involved with the family and will advise/ with the school to improve attendance.			

Appendix 5: Absence monitoring

Issue	Letter	Action
5 lates recorded over half term.	Late Letter	Lateness monitored by admin team.
		Report to HT if no improvement and consider what support required.
Repeated absence due to illness	Illness letter	Illness reduced – no further action
		Discuss support required/barriers to attendance. Referral to outside agencies if necessary.
Unexplained absence – family holiday suspected	Family Holiday Challenge	Reasonable explanation – absence authorised with appropriate code.
		Unreasonable explanation – absence recorded as unauthorised with appropriate code. If over 3 days - possible referral to LA for Penalty Notice.
Request for Leave of Absence - approved	Absence Authorised	Absence recorded as authorised with appropriate code.
Request for Leave of Absence - denied	Absence Unauthorised	Leave of Absence taken. If referral criteria met - possible referral to Local Authority for Penalty Notice to be issued.
Where there is extended unauthorised absence without family contact Children Missing from Education procedures will apply.		

Appendix 6: Attendance Expectations

Our attendance expectations

We believe that every member of staff plays a very significant role in achieving our attendance targets. The DfE wrote in its May 2022 guidance, “It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in the school, governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.”

We believe that children come to school to learn, to be safe and to grow as individuals in readiness for the opportunities of the 21st century. We believe that creating a warm, welcoming, exciting and safe environment is the key to achieving the attendance ambitions of each school. Our philosophy is to “listen, understand, empathise – but keep expectations high.

We expect commitment and engagement of all staff in ensuring that our school is a place where children want to be. We are therefore explicit in terms of our expectations of each other. The key focus of our strategy is support is built on an escalating level of response.

Teachers and support staff

As the first point of contact for most pupils, these adults are pivotal in setting the tone for the day. We expect those staff to do the following things:

- Contribute to and support the continued development of a warm, welcoming and safe environment for all children
- Welcome each child into the class by name and with a smile.
- Be aware, where possible, of absences of each child or patterns in absence in their group and make sure the child is supported in catching up missed work
- Welcome children who have been absent with warmth – *“it’s great to see you – we have missed you and I am really pleased you are better/back”* and never say *“Where have you been? You have missed so much work....”*
- Communicate with colleagues where necessary if there are any issues resulting from the absence that other staff should know (concern about work missed, response of other children, possible responses of colleagues) but also where there are possible safeguarding concerns reporting to the school’s DSL
- Notify the Attendance Lead if there is any suggestion of term time holiday
- Notify the DSL if there are any contextual safeguarding issues which might explain erratic or poor attendance

Administrative team

- Contribute to and support the continued development of the warm, welcoming, exciting and safe environment for all children
- Where possible greet the children by name and always with a smile and a greeting
- Make a special effort to provide a warm welcome to students returning with anxiety issues
- If necessary, walk the child to the classroom or ask for assistance if this is a cause of anxiety

- Reassure families that the school will monitor the child's welfare carefully during the course of the day and communicate with the family if there are any issue.
- Welcome children who have been absent with warmth – *"it's great to see you – we have missed you and I am really pleased you are better/back"* and never say *"Where have you been? You have missed so much work...."*
- Explain to parents that if they or their child have any worries about what's happening or has happened in school, please bring their child in to school and talk to us about it. Do not give your child a day off – this is when problems can snowball.

Midday and site team

- Welcome children who have been absent with warmth – *"it's great to see you – we have missed you and I am really pleased you are better/back"* and never say *"Where have you been? You have missed so much work...."*
- Contribute to and support the continued development of the warm, welcoming, exciting and safe environment for all children
- Where possible greet the children by name and always with a smile and a greeting