Attendance and Absence Policy
September 2024

Statement of Intent

Sir William Robertson Academy believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's attendance officers are Mrs Harmer and Mrs Jex, and can be contacted via enquiries@swracademy.org. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officers for queries or concerns about attendance.

Contents

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:

  o Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority

  o 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:

  o The importance of good attendance

  o That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues o The school's legal requirements for keeping registers

  o 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

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 Attendance Officers 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 Deputy Headteacher 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 Mr J Bennett and can be contacted via 01400 272422 or enquiries@swracademy.org

3.4 The attendance officers

The school attendance officers are responsible for:

> Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

> Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement > Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher

> Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

> Advising the headteacher / deputy headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixedpenalty notices

> Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

> Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Heads of Year where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

The attendance officers are Mrs R Harmer and Mrs C Jex and can be contacted via 01400 272422 or Rachel.harmer@swracademy.org/claire.jex@swracademy.org

3.5 Class Teachers/Base Tutors

Class teachers/base 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 to the Attendance Team by 09:30 for the morning mark and 12:30 for the afternoon.

3.6 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 school day on time

> Call the school to report their child's absence before 09:15 on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return

> 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

> Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting your child's Head of Year, who can be contacted via 01400 272422

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

> Attend every timetabled session, on time

> Sixth form must call the school to report their absence before 09:15 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence

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 08:45 and ends at 15:15.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:40 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken by 09:00 and will be kept open until 09:30. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:15 and will be kept open until 12:30.

Class teachers will also take informal registers at the start of each lesson period to ensure that pupils are attending all timetabled lessons. The registers will be analysed alongside formal registers in line with the section of this policy.

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 09:15, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school absence line via 01400 272422.

❯ Tutors will mark attendance via register during Base Time by 09:00 with either Present or Absent
❯ marks   Attendance Officers will take voicemails and emails for student absences and will record on registers with the necessary codes and add comments
❯ Base Tutors/Teachers will mark late arrivals and will record on the register with any necessary comments

❯ If no contact for absence is communicated from home by 10:00 when the absence report is run, then Attendance Officers will make safeguarding calls home by 11:15
❯ Home visits will be made to pupils on day 3 of absence without contact
❯ Social workers will be notified of an absence of any kind
❯ Follow up action will be assessed by Attendance Officers/Deputy Head and Head of Year as required

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, there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness or if the pupil's attendance is being tracked due to concern - 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 medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

❯ Contact school via enquiries@swracademy.org

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.

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

› After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

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.

› Identify whether the absence is approved or not

› Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent › Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will contact the Local Authority

› 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: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

› Safe and Well home visits will be carried out on day 3 of unexplained absence

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 the My Child at School app, written school reports and termly attendance reflection tasks. Where there is concern about attendance, the school will inform parents through tracking letters.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

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

› Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad

› Attending an interview

› Study leave

› A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable

› Exceptional circumstances

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

'Exceptional Circumstances' will be defined by the Headteacher, Mr Guest.

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. The headteacher 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

> Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

> If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made) Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

> Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school

> Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)

> Attending provision arranged by the local authority

> Attending work experience

> If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.2 Sanctions

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

Penalty notices

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

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 > Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.

> The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

At Sir William Robertson Academy, we celebrate and reward great attendance. Recognising improvement as well as overcoming barriers, we aim to reward individual victories, with the hopes of encouraging our students to strive for outstanding attendance.

> Aspire 100 Bands to congratulate 100% Attendance from previous fortnight. Participation in the fortnightly Rewards Breakfast and the ability to redeem a cookie from the canteen.

> Fearless Attender bands used on fortnightly basis to incentivise and reward students with attendance barriers/issues. They will be able to use the bands to redeem a cookie from the canteen.

> Each half term 4 x £10 Amazon Vouchers will be won by the top 3 "Best Attenders" in each year group (names to be pulled out of a hat/name generator) 3 x 100% attendance and 1 "Most Improved" per year group. Awarded and celebrated during Rewards Assemblies.

> Certificates awarded to all students on 100% at the end of each half term.

> Sweet treats given to 1 Tutor group per year group each week to celebrate best attendance for the week.

> Students reflect termly on the significance of their attendance in assemblies and reflection sessions with their Base Tutors

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

To address complex barriers to attendance amongst other concerns, Sir William Robertson Academy participates in joint planning with strategic safeguarding partners for students in the Early Helo arena including students on CiN and CP Plans.

The school also follows the local authority's EBSA pathway. Where neither of these are appropriate, the school invites parents to join us in our internal Aspire Support Planning for pupils who are absent due to complex barriers.

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

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

> Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.

> Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.

> Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.

> Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.

> Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

> Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.

> Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.

> Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.

> Using an internal or external specialist.

> Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.

> Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.

> Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.

> Temporary late starts or early finishes.

> Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.

> Small group work or on-to-one lessons.

> Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

> EBSA pathways

Aspire Support Planning

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

Sir William Robertson employs only non-teaching Heads of Year who alongside Attendance Officers are able to meet with parents or carers of pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence. In such planning, staff will consider:

> Phased returns to school

> Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.

> Enabling a pupil to have a reintegrative timetable.

> Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.

> Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.

> Temporary late starts or early finishes.

> EBSA pathways

> Aspire Support Planning

8. Attendance monitoring

> Weekly attendance data is monitored by Attendance Officers and shared with Heads of Year to disseminate to Base Tutors to support improved school attendance.

> Contact will be made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported.

> Pupil attendance drops to 95 percent – The school will contact home on behalf of Base Tutors to welcome conversations which offer support, discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance and ensure that it does not fall below the expected target of 95%. Attendance Officers will make a phone call home if applicable.

> Pupil attendance drops below 90 percent – Initial Tracking Letter will be sent home to raise concerns and notify of their child's current attendance percentage. The letter will also inform parents/carers that their child will be placed on a four-week tracking system to improve their attendance. Information outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to achieve this will be included.

> Pupil attendance under 90 percent – if after the first cycle of monitoring the student's attendance has improved significantly a congratulatory letter will be sent home and the child will be removed from the Attendance Tracker. If the student's attendance has not improved; an Amber Letter will be sent home requesting a meeting with school and Head of Year to devise a supportive plan to improve attendance.

> Pupil attendance under 90 percent – if after another four-week cycle of monitoring the student's attendance has improved significantly a congratulatory letter will be sent home and the child will be removed from the Attendance Tracker. If the student's attendance has not improved; a final Red Letter will be sent home requesting a meeting with Mr Bennett Deputy Head Teacher. Provision will be discussed, and targets will be set for raising attendance. This will be monitored over a further two-week period.

> Pupil attendance declines rapidly – parents will be invited to either: a school attendance meeting with the Head of Year, Attendance Officer and SLT if appropriate, or a medical action planning meeting with the Head of Year, Attendance Officer and SENDCO. Provision will be discussed and targets will be set for raising attendance. This will be monitored over a further two-week period.

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.

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.

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 severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)

> Provide regular attendance reports to Heads of Year and Tutors to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)

> Use data 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 the Local Authority and 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:

  o Discuss attendance and engagement at school o Listen, and understand barriers to

  attendance o Explain the help that is available o Explain the potential consequences of, and

  sanctions for, persistent and severe absence o 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 reviewed annually. 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

> Children Missing from Education Policy

> Behaviour policy

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

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

M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	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