



# Riverview C of E Primary and Nursery School

with Riverview Daycare

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Every child matters, every moment counts

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Headteacher: Mrs M Atkins

***Riverview exists to love, challenge and inspire children and adults  
within a Christian community***

***Our values are:  
Love, Respect, Trust, Forgiveness, Hope***

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY 2025/2026**

<b>Lead:</b>	Mrs M Atkins
<b>Links to:</b>	- Data Protection - Equality Information - SEND - Teaching & Learning - Behaviour
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	January 2025
<b>Next review due by:</b>	July 2026
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

**To be approved by the Learning and Progress Committee**

## **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](#)

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **The Head Teacher**

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 the attendance officer to be able to do so
- \* 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
- \* Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- \* Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- \* Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- \* 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 Attendance Officer**

The school Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- \* Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- \* Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- \* Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- \* Working with Surrey Attendance Service (SAS) and allocated Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO) to tackle persistent absence
- \* Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- \* To oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually
- \* To record all reasons for absences and lateness in the register

### **School Office staff**

School Office staff will:

- \* 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 specific staff, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- \* Share any concerns expressed about attendance or disaffection that might lead to non-attendance with the Headteacher and attached Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO)

### **Class Teachers:**

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- \* Completing registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- \* Following up any unexplained non-attendance or lateness with the Headteacher
- \* Informing the Headteacher of concerns
- \* Being alert to signs of disaffection that may lead to non-attendance and report them to the office staff or Headteacher

### **Parents/Carers**

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- \* Make sure their child attends every day and on time
- \* Call the school to report their child's absence before 09:00 on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- \* Provide the school with a minimum of 2 emergency contact numbers 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 the school to discuss any difficulties you are having

## **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- \* Attend school every day, on time
- \* Attend school in uniform (or PE kit on PE days) appropriately prepared for the day
- \* Discuss any problem preventing them from attending school, with a member of staff

## **4. Registers**

Under the provision of the Education Act 1996 (s434) and the Student Registration Regulations 1995 the school must keep an attendance register.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher - or a member of staff acting on their behalf - can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

## **5. Absence**

### **Recording Absences**

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

### **Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- \* Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- \* Absences which have never been properly explained
- \* Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- \* Excessive illness without medical evidence.

### **Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed valid under the Education Act 1996.

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

- \* Illness (including mental-health illness)
- \* 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).
- \* Parent 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 an educational provision
- \* 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

### **Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Note: Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:

- \* Work experience placements
- \* Field trips and educational visits
- \* Sporting activities
- \* Link courses or approved education off site
- \* Most types of dual registration

## **6. Reporting Absences**

Absences should be reported either by phone, voicemail, Parentmail or WhatsApp before 09:30 on the first day of absence and thereafter on a daily basis. Failure to do so may result in the school conducting an unannounced home visit.

If the school is concerned about a child's absence we may request a doctor's appointment card after 3 days of illness. If this is not provided any further absences could be marked as unauthorised.

### **Dental and medical treatments**

Whilst the school may grant requests for absence for dental and medical treatments, parents/carers are encouraged, whenever possible, to book medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. When appointments during school hours are unavoidable, the school office should be notified in advance in writing, of the date and time of the appointment and when the child will be collected and/or returned to school. Evidence of the appointment may be requested.

### **Frequent Absence**

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is unhelpful to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

### **Persistent Absence (PA)**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is considerably damaging to a child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Parents will be notified by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and will be invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officer and/or Family Support Worker and will be advised that no further absence (including sickness and diarrhoea) will be authorised without medical evidence.

### **Exceptional Leave of Absence**

*There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.*

Any savings that you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

It is widely known that the link between a student's attendance and attainment is closely linked.

Graduates earn a higher average hourly rate than young people who leave school with few or no qualifications.

School will only authorise leave of absence in term time in *exceptional circumstances*.

Where a parent wishes to request a leave of absence, a formal request must be made using our Leave of Absence forms (available from the school office). The Headteacher will consider the application on behalf of the Governors.

If the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional, consideration will then be given to the student's previous school attendance and also that the time requested does not exceed 10 sessions in any one academic year.

If a holiday is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the parent may be liable to a Penalty Notice.

## **7. Registration & Lateness**

- \* The school gates open at 08:25
- \* Children are expected to be sitting at their desks in class by 08:35.
- \* Morning registration will take place at 08:35.
- \* The registers will remain open for 30 minutes and any child, who arrives within the 30 minutes, will be marked late (L).
- \* For any pupil who arrives after the registers close at 09:05 the whole morning session will be marked as an unauthorised absence (U code). If a valid reason is given for the late arrival, for example, attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. (See Appendix 1)
- \* The afternoon registration will be taken at 13:00 for Infants and 13:15 for Junior's on a Monday-Thursday and at 11:00 for both Infants and Junior's on a Friday.
- \* In cases of persistent late arrival to school, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Family Support Worker

## **8. Non-Attendance**

### **Changing School**

It is important that if families decide to send the child in their care to a different school that they inform Riverview staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received from the parent:

- \* the dates the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next
- \* the address of the new school
- \* new home address (if it is known)

School staff will then confirm with the parents the leaving date for their child. Following this date, and confirmation that the child has started at their new school, the pupil's school records will be sent on to the new school within ten days of the child leaving. If no notification is received from a new school then the child's name will not be removed from the school roll until after an investigation by the Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO).

### **Escalation Process - Responding To Non-Attendance**

If a child is absent for any reason, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the school. However, if the child is absent and no reason has been provided the following procedure will apply:

- \* On the first day of absence, if no note or telephone call is received from the parent/carer by 09:30, the school will endeavour to contact them as soon as possible. The absence will be marked as unauthorised until the school receives a valid reason for absence
- \* If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer and a home visit may be made by the Attendance Officer and Family Support Worker.
- \* If there is still no response, the school may need to seek further advice from our attached Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO).

- \* Failure to comply with the expectations set by the Surrey Attendance Service (SAS) may result in further action, an application for an Education Supervision Order, or court prosecution.

Should a child's attendance reach 50% or below and no improvement is being made, a referral will be made to Surrey Children's Services for their involvement.

### **Penalty Notices**

The Surrey Attendance Service (SAS), acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and require the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

### **Circumstances when a Penalty Notice may be issued.**

1. Pupils identified by police and Surrey Attendance Advice Intervention Officers (AAIO) engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
2. The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' has not been authorised by the Headteacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

3. The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 10 school weeks. The parents'/carers' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of register without good reason.
4. Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

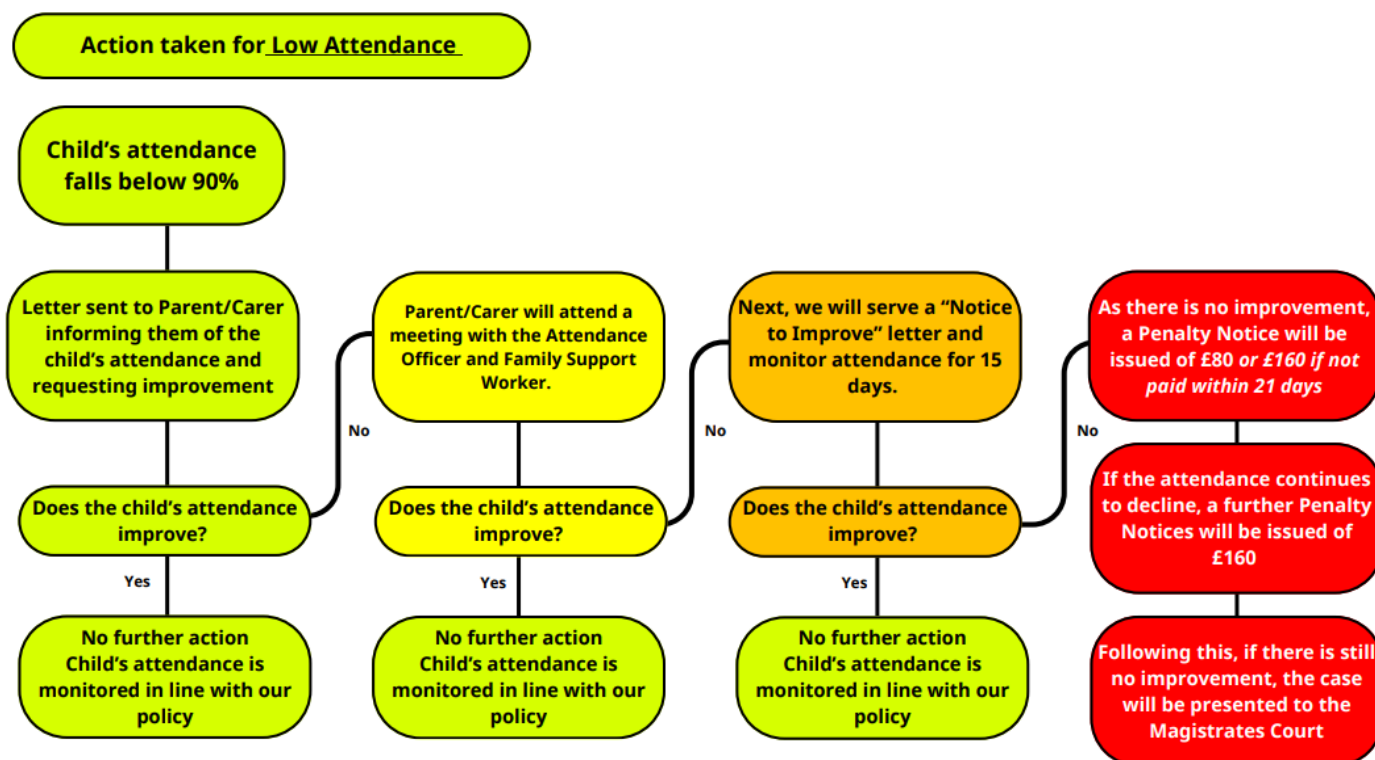
**With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time (paragraph 2 above) parents/carers will be sent a 'Notice To Improve' their child's attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**

### **Amount Payable Under a Penalty Notice: The Education (Penalty Notices)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2024**

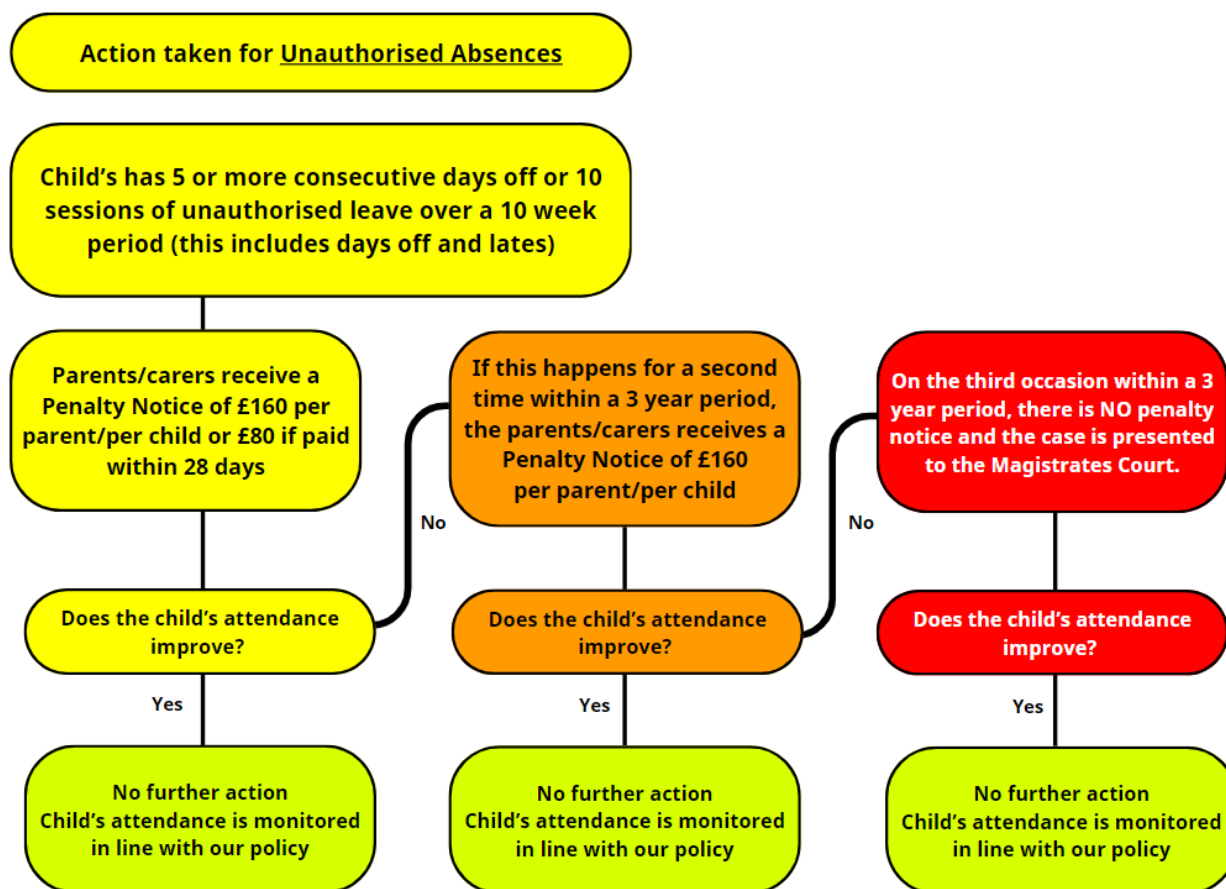
1. If a parent/carer has not incurred a penalty notice relating to the relevant child/children since 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00 **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to **£80.00 if paid within 21 days** of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

- If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, the rolling **3-year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice** and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, per parent/carer per child, if paid within 28 days. There will be **no reduction** for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.
- If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3-year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will **NOT** receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, per parent/carer per child, in the Magistrates Court under S444 Education Act 1996.

### Low Attendance



## Unauthorised Absences



### **The Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO)**

The Surrey Attendance Service (SAS) monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. The Surrey Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO) will work with school staff and parents/carers to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence.

If attendance problems cannot be resolved by school then the school will make a referral to the Surrey Attendance Service (SAS). The Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO) will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed, but unauthorised absence persists, the Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO) can use sanctions such as penalty notices and prosecution.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could result upon conviction in a magistrate's court, to a fine not exceeding £2,500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.

## **9. Encouraging Attendance**

Riverview C of E Primary & Nursery School encourages regular attendance in the following ways:

- \* by providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- \* by responding promptly to a child or parent's concerns about the school or other pupils

- \* by accurate and punctual completion of registers during morning and afternoon registration (see Lateness).
- \* by publishing attendance statistics
- \* the names of all children who achieve 100% attendance by the end of the academic year are included in the final newsletter of the year
- \* by weekly class awards for the highest attendance
- \* FREE whole school breakfast on first day of each term
- \* by informing parents/carers in writing of irregular attendance, including lateness
- \* by, if necessary, arranging meetings with parents/carers
- \* by referring the families to the attached Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO) if the irregular attendance continues
- \* The Headteacher will monitor pupils' attendance with the school attendance officer, the Family Support Worker and with the attached Attendance Advice Intervention Officer (AAIO) by celebrating good attendance as follows:-

<b>Weekly</b>	
Two classes with the highest attendance	Feather and Stone - the teddy bears are awarded to first and second place.  A bag with the number 1-30 – a number is picked out at random and the person who is that number in the register, receives a prize.
Individuals with 100% attendance	A child's name is chosen at random and they win a prize.
<b>Half-Termly</b>	
2 x individuals (for 100% attendance including punctuality)	£10 Roblox or Amazon voucher of their choice
<b>Termly</b>	
Class with the best attendance	The class can choose a reward of their choice, this could be extra playtime, an afternoon of games, time on the trim trail etc.
Individuals with 100% attendance	Fun activities including, movie afternoon, external trips such as Hobbledown

### **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/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, annually by the Attendance Officer and Family Support Worker. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **11. 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
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity. The B code cannot be used for pupils who are receiving online learning within the home.
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>C1*</b>	Leave of Absence for a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
<b>C2*</b>	Leave of absence for a child on a part-time timetable	Authorised absence. Part-time timetables should only be used as a temporary measure, parental consent is required. The timetable should be frequently reviewed. Unauthorised sessions should be recorded if the child fails to attend expected sessions.
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days more than agreement)	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution	Approved Education Activity
<b>K*</b>	Alternative provision arranged by the Local Authority to ensure Section 19 duties met	Approved alternative provider
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present

<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>Q*</b>	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements	Authorised absence
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>X</b>	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Y</b>	Enforced and partial enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Y1*</b>	Normal transport arrangements unavailable	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Y2*</b>	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Y3*</b>	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Y4*</b>	Unable to attend due to whole school unexpectedly being closed	Not counted in possible attendance

<b>Y5*</b>	Unable to attend due to being criminally detained	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Y6*</b>	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance, or law	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Y7*</b>	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendance
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendance
<i>Attendance coding changes July 2024</i>		