



Staplehurst School

Attendance Policy (Draft)

Date

Awaiting approval
Policy to be reviewed next

September 2026
September 2028

Contents

Introduction	3
Aims	3
The Role of Headteacher	3
The Role of School Staff	4
The Role of Parents	4
Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance	5
Persistent or Severe Absence	6
Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness	6
Illness	7
Holidays During Term Time	7
Families with children of SEND	7
Leave of absence during term time	7
Examples of Unauthorised Absence	8
Persistent Unauthorised Absence	8
Penalty Notices and Legal Procedures for Unauthorised Absences	8
Notice to Improve Letter	9
Exceptional Circumstances	9
Legal Grounds for Absence	10
Medical, Dental or Hospital appointments	10
Leavers and Children Missing in Education & Removing a Pupil from Roll	10
Education for Health Needs including Mental Health	11
Absences for Specific Communities – T Coding	11
Monitoring & Reviewing	12
Appendix 1 Attendance Codes	14
Appendix 2 DFE Guidance Summary Table of responsibilities	18
Appendix 3 Flowchart – attendance procedures	22

Introduction

Staplehurst School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement for all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical to success and ensures that pupils benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided.

One of our core principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. At Staplehurst School, we actively promote 100% attendance, with an expected attendance level of 99% for all children. A range of weekly, termly, and annual awards are used to encourage and reward good attendance and punctuality.

The Governors, Headteacher, and staff recognise that parents and carers have both a vital role and a legal responsibility in ensuring their child's regular attendance. The school will work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils, and external agencies to identify, investigate, and resolve attendance concerns.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of attendance, as it is directly linked to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the primary responsibility for school attendance lies with parents/carers. Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised where exceptional circumstances apply and approval has been granted by the Headteacher.

This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in maintaining and promoting high levels of attendance at Staplehurst School.

Aims

- Create a culture in which good or excellent attendance is the norm.
- Demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality are valued by the school community.
- Maintain and develop effective communication between home and school regarding attendance.
- Establish clear and effective procedures to prevent and address absence.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher holds overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the school's attendance policy. The Headteacher will:

- Ensure all school personnel, pupils, and parents are aware of — and comply with — this policy.
- Monitor attendance across different groups, including by gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM), Special Educational Needs (SEN), and persistent absentees.
- Use attendance data effectively to identify trends and inform strategic planning.
- Target interventions and provide support for pupils with poor attendance.
- Maintain a clear system for parents to report their child's absence.
- Regularly remind parents of their responsibility regarding attendance.
- Promote the importance of attendance throughout the school community.
- Publicise good attendance in assemblies, newsletters, and school communications.
- Provide or arrange training for staff, where needed, on attendance codes and the distinction between authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Strengthen links with external agencies that support families.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy.

Role of School Staff

At Staplehurst School, attendance is a whole-school responsibility, with clear roles allocated to specific members of staff.

Class Teachers

- Complete the attendance register twice daily, at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Understand that accurate and timely register marking is a legal requirement.

Office Staff

Office staff are responsible for the day-to-day monitoring and administration of attendance, and will:

- Support the Headteacher in implementing this policy.
- Monitor daily attendance at individual and class level.
- Keep the Headteacher informed of attendance data and trends.
- Contact parents/carers regarding concerns about their child's attendance.
- Forward all term-time holiday requests to the Headteacher.
- Compile attendance reports for the Headteacher, Governing Body, and Local Authority Attendance Service.
- Ensure attendance registers are up to date and accurate.
- Contact parents if their child's absence has not been reported by 8:45am, and continue efforts until contact is made.
- Notify the key worker if a child on the Child Protection Register is absent without explanation.
- Arrange for staff to visit vulnerable children on the first day of absence if there is a cause for concern.

- Deploy staff to collect a vulnerable child from home if a parent is unable to bring them to school.
- Model good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure registration times are adhered to:
 - **Morning register:** Opens at **8:50am** and closes at **9:20am**.
 - **Afternoon register:** Opens at **1:15pm** and closes at **1:45pm**.
- Record punctuality as follows:
 - Pupils arriving between **9:00am and 9:20am** will be marked Late (L code).
 - Pupils arriving after **9:20am** will receive an Unauthorised Absence (U code).
- Monitor lateness. Where a child is late 5 or more times in a half-term, a letter will be sent to parents inviting them to a formal meeting. Repeated U codes may lead to a Penalty Notice or prosecution.

Parents/Carers

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time. Parents are responsible for:

- Complying fully with this policy.
- Ensuring their child arrives at school punctually each day.
- Teaching their child the importance of good attendance.
- Informing the school of their child's absence by **8:45am** on the **absence line: 01580 891765 (Option 1)**.
- Updating the school with any changes to contact details.
- Informing the school of any changes in family circumstances that may affect their child's attendance, so support can be provided.
- Collecting their child on time at the end of the school day.
- Not taking holidays during term time.

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

Monitoring Thresholds and Early Action

Attendance Level	School Action
Above 95%	Attendance monitored by the school office. Concerns are investigated and shared with the Deputy Head/Family Liaison Officer. Parents/carers contacted if appropriate.
90–95%	School issues intervention letters to raise awareness and encourage improvement.
Below 90%	A referral is made to the in-house Education Welfare Officer (EWO) if there is no improvement or if unauthorised absences continue.
Persistent issues	Where attendance concerns are linked to wider family challenges, an Early Help referral may be initiated for additional support.

Dealing with Low Attendance: Staged Response

Stage 1: Initial Letter of Concern (School Letter 1)

- **Trigger:**
 - Attendance drops below 95%, or
 - 4 or more unauthorised sessions are recorded.
 - **Action:**
 - A letter is sent to parents/carers expressing concern and outlining the importance of regular attendance.
-

Stage 2: Escalated Letter of Concern (School Letter 2)

- **Trigger:**
 - Attendance does not improve following School Letter 1, or
 - The pupil has 3 separate periods of absence, or
 - The pupil is absent for 5 consecutive days.
 - **Action:**
 - A second letter is sent, escalating the concern and warning of possible next steps or consequences.
 - **Additional Actions May Include:**
 - Parent meeting with the attendance team.
 - Support offered for identified barriers to attendance (e.g. Breakfast Club access, alternative start times).
 - Meet and Greet provision for vulnerable pupils.
 - Referral to external or internal support services as appropriate.
-

Stage 3: Meeting with Parents/Carers

- **Goal:**
 - To explore the reasons behind poor attendance, discuss barriers, and agree on an action plan to improve attendance.
- **Possible Outcome:**
 - Introduction of an Attendance Contract.

Stage 4: Attendance Contract

- **Purpose:**
 - A formal agreement between the school and the family, establishing expectations, targets, and support strategies.
- **Possible Elements of the Contract:**
 - Specific attendance targets (e.g., improvement to 95% within a set timeframe).
 - Regular communication between the school and family.
 - Agreed-upon interventions and support.
 - Consequences if attendance targets are not met, including potential referral to Kent County Council's Attendance Service or further legal action.

Persistent or Severe Absence

Under national definitions:

- A pupil is classified as **Persistently Absent (PA)** if they miss more than **10%** of school sessions.
- A pupil is classified as **Severely Absent** if they miss more than **50%** of school sessions.

Note: Each school day is made up of two sessions—morning and afternoon. Absence from either counts as one missed session.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness

Penalty Notices for persistent lateness will be issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct (effective 19 August 2024).

Triggers for Penalty Notice:

- 10 incidents of late arrival after registers have closed (U code) within a rolling period of 10 school weeks may lead to:
 - A Penalty Notice, or
 - A Notice to Improve letter.

Notice to Improve Letter:

- A final opportunity for the parent/carer to:
 - Engage with support offered by the school or Local Authority.
 - Improve the pupil's attendance before a Penalty Notice is issued.
- If attendance does not improve and support has not been accepted or has been unsuccessful, a Penalty Notice will be issued.

Non-Payment of Penalty Notice:

- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority will initiate court proceedings.

Managing Absences: Illness, Holidays, and Leave of Absence

Illness

Parents/carers are encouraged to send children to school where they are well enough to participate in learning. Guidance regarding common childhood illnesses can be obtained from NHS advice and school communications. The school will consider each illness-related absence individually and will authorise absence where satisfied that the pupil is unable to attend due to illness.

If medication is required during the school day, a Medical Consent Form (available from the school office) must be completed by the parent/carer. Medicines prescribed by a doctor can then be administered by trained school staff.

Holidays During Term Time

In line with Government guidelines, family holidays during term time will not be authorised. While holidays can be valuable family time, the school year offers ample opportunity for travel outside term dates.

If a parent/carer feels there is an exceptional reason for a term-time holiday, they must:

- Complete a Request for Leave Form (available from the school office)
- Submit it at least one calendar month in advance
- Provide a clear explanation of the reason for the request

The Headteacher will respond in writing, either authorising or declining the request. Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school for a holiday, and all absences are reviewed under strict criteria.

Families of Children with SEND

The school recognises that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may experience additional barriers to attendance. Where attendance concerns arise, the school will work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and relevant professionals to understand those barriers and identify appropriate support.

Attendance support plans and interventions may be adapted to meet individual needs, and reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and attendance becomes a concern, or where barriers to attendance relate directly to the pupil's special educational needs, the school will liaise with the Local Authority and other relevant professionals as appropriate.

The school maintains high expectations for attendance for all pupils whilst recognising that support may need to be tailored to meet individual needs.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

Any request to take a child out of school for any reason must be submitted using the Request for Leave of Absence During Term Time Form.

- Only the Headteacher has the authority to approve leave.
- A letter or phone message does not authorise an absence.
- Parents will be informed in writing of the outcome of any request.

If an absence is taken without authorisation or if the school believes false information has been provided (e.g. reporting illness while actually on holiday), the absence will be marked as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice.

Where there are genuine concerns regarding the authenticity of illness absence, the school may request medical evidence to support future absence requests. This may include circumstances where illness absence is frequent, prolonged, forms part of a concerning pattern, or where there are other attendance concerns. Decisions will be considered on an individual basis and discussed with parents/carers where appropriate.

Examples of Unauthorised Absence

Absence requests **will not** be approved for the following reasons:

- Persistent, non-specific illness (e.g. “feeling unwell”)
 - Illness of another family member
 - Oversleeping or late night
 - Lack of school uniform or appropriate clothing
 - Confusion about term dates
 - Weather-related excuses (e.g. snow) when within walking distance
 - Routine medical/dental appointments taking more than half a day without justification
 - Medical appointments of other family members
 - Birthdays
 - Shopping trips
 - Family holidays (with rare exceptions)
-

Persistent Unauthorised Absence

A pupil is considered persistently absent where they miss 10% or more of their possible school sessions.

In such cases, the school will refer the family to its in-house Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO may contact the family and, if necessary, invite them to a formal meeting.

Penalty Notices and Legal Procedures for Unauthorised Absence

Legal Framework

Under the Education Act 1996, parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. If this is not met, the school may request a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority.

Threshold for Penalty Notices

As of 19th August 2024, a Penalty Notice may be issued when:

- A child accumulates 10 unauthorised sessions (5 full days) of absence in a 10-week rolling period
- A child is found in a public place during school hours following exclusion

Note: One school day consists of two sessions — morning and afternoon.

Penalty Notice Charges

- **First Penalty Notice:**
 - £160 per parent/carer per child (within 28 days)
 - Reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days
- **Second Penalty Notice (within 3 years of the first):**
 - Flat rate of £160 per parent/carer per child (no discount)
- **Third Offence:**
 - A third Penalty Notice **cannot** be issued
 - The Local Authority **must consider prosecution** in the Magistrates Court

Failure to Pay

- If a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority will pursue legal proceedings through the Magistrates Court.

Notice to Improve Letter

Before a Penalty Notice is issued, the Local Authority will send a Notice to Improve Letter, offering the parent/carer a final opportunity to engage with support and improve the child's attendance. If support is refused or unsuccessful, the Penalty Notice will be issued.

Exceptional Circumstances: Definition and Examples

Leave during term time can only be authorised in “**exceptional circumstances**”. These are typically defined as:

- Rare
- Significant
- Unavoidable
- Short

"Unavoidable" means the event **could not reasonably be scheduled outside of school time**.

Illustrative Examples (not exhaustive):

- Return of a parent from active military service where family leave is not otherwise possible
- Bereavement or terminal illness of an immediate family member
- Attendance at a wedding or funeral of someone close to the family (with supporting documentation)
- Leave advised by a health professional as part of recovery from medical or emotional issues
- Other significant personal circumstances, supported by evidence

The Headteacher has full discretion to consider each case and determine both the authorisation and the appropriate length of absence. Supporting evidence (e.g., medical note, wedding invitation, order of service) must be provided.

Legal Grounds for Absence

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, parents are guilty of an offence of failing to ensure regular school attendance unless they can demonstrate that the absence occurred due to one of the following lawful reasons:

- The child was absent with leave (authorised by the school)
- The child was ill or absent due to an unavoidable cause (which must relate to the child, not the parent)
- The absence was for a religious observance
- The Local Authority failed to provide transport (in cases where it was legally obliged to)

These are the only legally acceptable reasons for a child to be absent from school.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in exceptional circumstances, provided that a request is submitted in advance. Authorisation is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body. Each case is considered on its individual merits and decisions are final.

Retrospective authorisation of absence is not permitted. If a request is denied and the absence is still taken, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service, which may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to each parent for each child.

Failure to pay the penalty notice within 28 days will result in the Local Authority initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court.

Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments

Parents are strongly encouraged to book medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible to minimise disruption to learning.

- If a child attends an appointment and then returns to school, they will be marked as authorised late for that session. This ensures they are included in the daily attendance register for safety (e.g. in the event of a fire).
- If the child does not return to school after the appointment, they will be recorded as 'M' (authorised medical absence).

Please note: Even authorised medical absences count towards a child's overall attendance percentage.

Leavers and Children Missing in Education (CME)

Staplehurst School is committed to safeguarding pupils, which includes having robust systems for tracking leavers.

If your child is leaving the school (other than moving to secondary school at the end of Year 6), parents must provide the school with the following information:

- Date of move
- New address
- Name and start date of the new school
- Reason for the move

If this information is not provided and the school is unable to contact the family, the child may be deemed a Child Missing in Education (CME). In such cases, the Local Authority has a legal duty to investigate the child's whereabouts.

Removal from School Roll

In accordance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, a pupil may be removed from the school roll in the following circumstances:

- The pupil fails to return within 10 school days following an authorised leave of absence and no valid reason is provided
- The pupil has unauthorised absence for 20 consecutive school days with no reasonable grounds
- After reasonable enquiries, the pupil's whereabouts cannot be established

In all such cases, the school will liaise with the Local Authority and follow statutory procedures before removing a child from the roll.

Education for Health Needs (Including Mental Health)

Under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, Local Authorities are legally responsible for ensuring that children who cannot attend school due to health needs (physical or mental) receive suitable and, where possible, full-time education.

School Responsibilities:

- Support pupils with health needs as much as possible within the school
- Initiate discussions with the Local Authority when the school is no longer able to meet the child's educational needs due to health issues
- Work with medical professionals to develop Individual Healthcare Plans (IHCs) where appropriate

Local Authority Responsibilities:

- Arrange suitable alternative education for children unable to attend for 15 school days or more (consecutive or cumulative)
- Consider part-time provision if full-time education is not in the child's best interest due to health
- Ensure education is provided as soon as the threshold is met

Schools may not remove a child from the register for medical reasons unless specific conditions are met, including certification from a school medical officer, and the pupil (or parent) must not intend to return.

Absences for Specific Communities: T Code Guidance

The T Code is used in the school attendance register to mark authorised absence for children from Traveller communities when they are travelling for work purposes.

Who is included under the Traveller category?

- Irish and Scottish Travellers
- English and Welsh Gypsies
- Roma
- Showmen (fairground people)
- Circus people
- Bargees
- New Age Travellers

When to Use the T Code:

- The family is travelling for occupational purposes
- Absence is agreed in advance with the Headteacher
- It is uncertain if the child is receiving educational provision while travelling

When the T Code Cannot Be Used:

- For non-work-related absences (e.g. weddings, funerals, or holidays)
- When parents do not seek prior approval
- When families are not travelling and are living at a fixed address

Children from Traveller communities are expected to attend a school near their travelling location and may be dual-registered with a base school and a local school.

The T Code will only be used at the Headteacher's discretion and only when all criteria are met. Parents are encouraged to notify the school in advance so that learning resources can be provided if appropriate.

Monitoring and Review

- Attendance data is reviewed annually during the Autumn Term by the Learning and Development (L&D) Committee of the Governing Body.
- If attendance levels fall below the national average, the Governing Body may take action.
- This policy is accessible to all school staff and governors, and significant amendments will be discussed prior to formal approval.
- The policy will be formally reviewed every three years, or sooner if statutory changes arise.

Appendix 1: Attendance and Absence Codes

The following national attendance and absence codes should be used in accordance with the Department for Education's statutory guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The appropriate national attendance or absence code must be recorded for each pupil on the admission register whenever the attendance register is taken.

Present at School

Code	Definition	When to use
/	Present – morning session	The pupil is present at school when the morning attendance register begins to be taken.
\	Present – afternoon session	The pupil is present at school when the afternoon attendance register begins to be taken.
L	Late arrival before the register closes	The pupil is absent when the register begins to be taken but arrives before the register closes. The pupil is counted as present.

Attending an Approved Educational Activity

Code	Definition	When to use
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority	The pupil is attending a place other than the school, or another school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the Local Authority under the relevant statutory duties. The nature of the educational activity must also be recorded.
V	Educational visit or trip	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational visit or trip.
P	Approved sporting activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is a sporting activity.
W	Work experience	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is work experience.
B	Other approved educational activity	The pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity which is not otherwise covered by codes K, V, P or W. The nature of the educational activity must also be recorded.
D	Dual registered – attending another school	The pupil is attending another school at which they are also a registered pupil.

Authorised Absence – Leave of Absence

Code	Definition	When to use
C1	Regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	The pupil has been granted leave to participate in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad.
M	Medical or dental appointment	The pupil has been granted leave to attend a medical or dental appointment. Schools should encourage appointments to be arranged outside school hours wherever reasonably possible.
J1	Interview	The pupil has been granted leave to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution.
S	Study leave	The pupil has been granted leave to study for a public examination. This code should be used only in accordance with DfE requirements.
C2	Temporary reduced/part-time timetable	The pupil is of compulsory school age and has been granted leave because an agreed temporary reduced timetable does not require them to attend that session. A reduced timetable should be temporary, regularly reviewed and form part of a plan to return the pupil to full-time education.
C	Leave of absence for other circumstances	The pupil has been granted leave of absence because of exceptional or other circumstances which are not covered by another specific leave-of-absence code. Leave should be granted only where the school considers the circumstances appropriate.

Other Authorised Absence

Code	Definition	When to use
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	The pupil is a mobile child whose parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with that parent. This code relates specifically to occupational travel and should not be used for ordinary family travel or holidays.
R	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs.
I	Illness	The pupil is unable to attend because of sickness. This includes physical and mental health-related illness. Code I should not be used for medical or dental appointments.

E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision	The pupil is suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision has been made for the session. Where suitable alternative education is being provided, the attendance code should reflect the provision and circumstances rather than automatically continuing to use E.
---	---	--

Not Required to Attend

Code	Definition	When to use
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend	The pupil is not of compulsory school age and their timetable does not require them to attend that session. For example, this may apply to an agreed attendance pattern for a Reception-age pupil before they reach compulsory school age. X should not automatically be used simply because a non-compulsory-school-age pupil is absent for another reason.

Important distinction between X and C2:

Code X applies where a pupil is not yet of compulsory school age and is not required to attend the session under their agreed timetable. Code C2 applies to a pupil of compulsory school age who is not required to attend a particular session because of an agreed temporary reduced timetable.

Unable to Attend Because of Unavoidable Cause

Code	Definition	When to use
Q	Lack of access arrangements	The pupil is unable to attend because the Local Authority has failed to make the necessary access arrangements to facilitate attendance in the circumstances prescribed by the regulations.
Y1	Transport normally provided is unavailable	The school is not within walking distance of the pupil's home and transport to and from school that is normally provided is unavailable.
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend because a local, national or international emergency has caused widespread disruption to travel.
Y3	Part of the school premises is closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil cannot practicably be accommodated in the parts that remain in use.
Y4	Whole school unexpectedly closed	The school was due to meet for the session but the whole school has unexpectedly closed and the session has been cancelled.
Y5	Criminal justice detention	The pupil is unable to attend because they are subject to a sentence of detention in the circumstances specified by the regulations.

Y6	Public health guidance or law	The pupil's travel to, or attendance at, school would be contrary to or prohibited by relevant public health guidance or legislation relating to infection or disease.
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	The pupil is unable to attend because of another unavoidable cause not covered by Y1–Y6. The circumstances should be in the nature of an emergency or unavoidable cause that prevents attendance. The school must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause.

Code Y7 should not be used simply because attending school is difficult or inconvenient. The circumstances must prevent the pupil from attending and must meet the requirements of the DfE guidance.

Unauthorised Absence

Code	Definition	When to use
G	Holiday without leave	The pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday and the school has not granted leave.
N	Circumstances of absence not yet established	The pupil is absent and the reason has not yet been established. Schools should make reasonable efforts to establish the reason and amend the register to the appropriate code once this is known. N should not routinely remain as the final recorded reason for an absence.
O	Other unauthorised absence	The pupil is absent in circumstances not covered by another code, or the school is not satisfied that the reason provided is one for which the absence should be authorised.
U	Arrived after registration closed	The pupil arrives at school after the attendance register has closed but before the end of the session. This is recorded as an unauthorised absence for that session.

Administrative Codes

Code	Definition	When to use
Z	Prospective pupil	The pupil's name has been entered on the admission register in advance of their agreed starting date. This code is not collected in the school census.
#	Planned whole-school closure	Used for a planned whole-school closure where no attendance session is taking place, for example school holidays, INSET days or other planned closures. This code is not collected in the school census.

Important Notes

The school will ensure that attendance and absence codes are used consistently and in accordance with current Department for Education statutory guidance.

Where a pupil is attending education away from the school site, the school will satisfy itself that the appropriate national code is being used and will undertake the necessary safeguarding and attendance checks.

Codes B and K require the school to record the nature of the educational activity.

Code Y7 requires the school to record the nature of the unavoidable cause.

Where a pupil is receiving remote education while absent from school, this does not in itself mean that the pupil should be recorded as attending. The appropriate absence code should continue to be recorded according to the circumstances of the absence.

The school will regularly review temporary reduced timetables. They should be used only where appropriate, be time limited and include a clear plan towards increasing attendance and returning the pupil to full-time education.

Reference

Department for Education, Working Together to Improve School Attendance – statutory guidance, current version updated July 2026.

Department for Education, national pupil attendance and absence codes applicable in England.

Appendix 2: DfE Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance Working Together to Improve School Attendance

The Department for Education's *Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance* applies from 19 August 2024 and should be read alongside the current statutory guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, updated July 2026.

All pupils

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

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

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

Persistently absent pupils

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

Severely absent pupils

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

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

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

Support for pupils with a social worker

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

APPENDIX 3: Attendance Procedures Flow Chart

Attendance Procedures Flow Chart

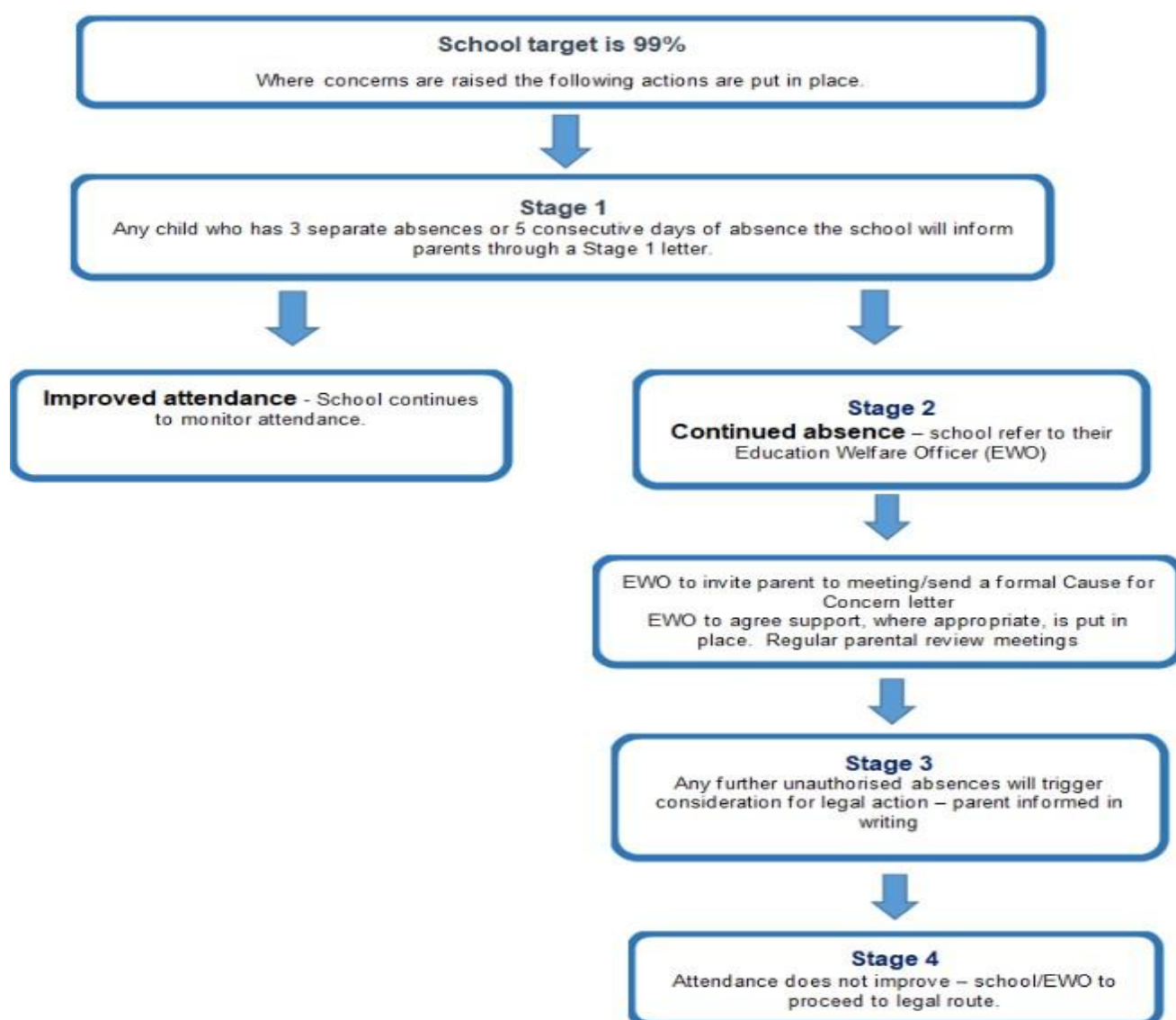
Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Head Teacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits.

The procedures below are followed to ensure that this happens.

All pupils' attendance is monitored via Sims and the school colour tracking system. All teaching staff are given copies of colour tracking on a weekly basis.

First day contact text messages are sent (by 10.00am) to parents for any unreported absences.

Daily telephone calls to parents of PA pupils



APPENDIX 4: School Letter Lateness 1

Dear [Parent/Carer's Name],

Re: Punctuality Concern for [Pupil's Full Name] (DOB: [Date of Birth])

I am writing to you regarding concerns about [Pupil's First Name]'s punctuality. Our records show that [he/she/they] has arrived late to school on multiple occasions this term/year, which is beginning to cause disruption to [his/her/their] learning.

Arriving on time is crucial to ensure that [Pupil's First Name] has a calm and settled start to the school day and is fully prepared for learning. Regular lateness can lead to missed learning opportunities and affect [his/her/their] ability to engage confidently in lessons.

We appreciate that there may be occasional unavoidable circumstances, and we are committed to working with you to understand and address any difficulties that may be impacting punctuality.

We would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further to discuss how we can support you in improving [Pupil's First Name]'s timely arrival at school. Please contact the school office at your earliest convenience to arrange a suitable time for a conversation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working together to ensure [Pupil's First Name] is making the most of every school day.

Yours sincerely,

Enc: Registration Certificate

APPENDIX 5: School Letter Lateness 2

Dear [Parent/Carer's Name],

Re: Ongoing Punctuality Concern – [Pupil's Full Name] (DOB: [Date of Birth])

I am writing to express continued concern regarding [Pupil's First Name]'s punctuality. Despite previous communication and support offered, [he/she/they] continues to arrive late to school on a regular basis.

Frequent lateness not only affects [Pupil's First Name]'s own learning but also causes disruption to the start of the school day for both [him/her/them] and their peers. It is essential that all pupils arrive on time to benefit fully from the education provided and to establish positive routines.

We would like to work with you to understand any ongoing difficulties and to explore any further support the school may be able to offer in improving [Pupil's First Name]'s punctuality.

Please contact the school office to arrange a meeting or phone call at your earliest convenience. We hope to work together to ensure that [Pupil's First Name] begins each day on time and is able to fully engage in learning from the start of the school day.

If we do not see an improvement, we may have no option but to consider a referral to our Educational Welfare Service, Mrs Alison Smith, Team EWS.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

APPENDIX 6: School letter Attendance 1

Dear [Parent/Carer's Name],

Re: Attendance Concern for [Pupil's Full Name] (DOB: [Date of Birth])

I am writing to you regarding [Pupil's First Name]'s school attendance, which is currently recorded at **0.0%**, with **0 sessions attended** this term/year.

Regular school attendance is vital for your child's academic progress, personal development, and overall wellbeing. Persistent absence can significantly impact their ability to keep up with learning and build positive relationships with peers and staff.

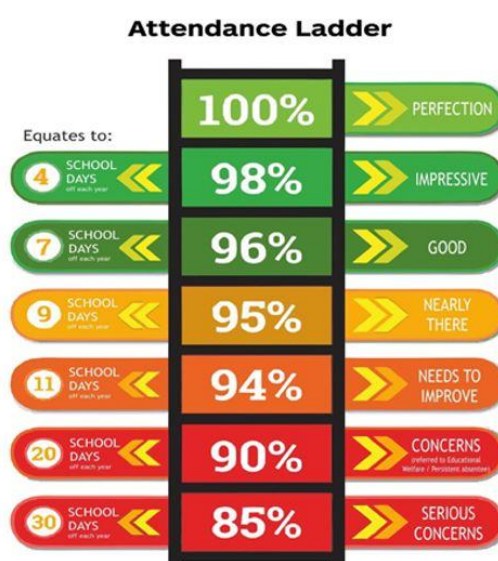
We understand that there may be genuine reasons for absence, and we are committed to working together to identify and overcome any barriers that may be preventing [Pupil's First Name] from attending school. Our aim is to offer the right support at the right time.

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this with you further. Please contact the school office at your earliest convenience to arrange a suitable time for a conversation.

We look forward to hearing from you soon and working together to support [Pupil's First Name] in returning to school and engaging fully in their education.

Yours sincerely,

Enc. Registration Certificate



APPENDIX 7: School letter Attendance 2

Dear [Parent/Carer's Name],

Re: Ongoing Attendance Concerns for [Pupil's Full Name] (DOB: [Date of Birth])

I am writing to you again regarding our growing concerns about [Pupil's First Name]'s ongoing absence from school. Their current attendance stands at **[insert percentage]%**, with a continued pattern of absence that is affecting their learning, development, and wellbeing.

Despite our previous correspondence and the offer of support, [Pupil's Name] continues to miss school, and we have not yet seen any significant improvement in their attendance. Regular school attendance is not only a legal requirement but also a vital part of ensuring your child reaches their full potential.

We now require **medical evidence or other supporting documentation** to authorise any further absences. This can include a letter from a GP or specialist, a copy of a prescription or appointment card, or other relevant documentation. Without such evidence, future absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please contact the school urgently to discuss this matter and explore how we can work together to improve [Pupil's First Name]'s attendance. We remain committed to supporting your family, but it is essential that we see prompt action and improved attendance from this point forward.

If we do not see an improvement, or receive the required evidence, we may have no option but to consider a referral to our Educational Welfare Service, Mrs Alison Smith, Team EWS, which may result in formal intervention.

We urge you to treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

