



# Walton CEVC Primary School

## Attendance and Absence Policy

### 2026 - 2027

Date policy last reviewed: September 2026

Signed by:

|                          |                    |                             |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>Mr Lucas Upham</u>    | Headteacher        | Date: <u>September 2026</u> |
| <u>Revd David Hatrey</u> | Chair of governors | Date: <u>September 2026</u> |

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## Statement of intent

**Walton CEVC Primary School** 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.

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

The school takes a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognises the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, supporting pupils with medical conditions or disabilities, safeguarding, pastoral support and wellbeing, support for young carers and children with a social worker, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

The school is committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with the LA and other relevant partners to understand and remove barriers to attendance and provide appropriate support.
- 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 understand their legal responsibility to make sure their child receives an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have, and that, where their child is registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's Senior Attendance Champion is Mr Lucas Upham, Headteacher, and can be contacted via **[office@waltonprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@waltonprimary.co.uk)** or via telephone on 01458 443675

# 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Acts 1996 and 2002
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended
- The Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013
- The Children and Young Persons Acts 1933 and 1963
- Equality Act 2010
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)'
- DfE 'Working together to safeguard children'
- DfE 'Children missing education'
- DfE 'Providing remote education: guidance for schools'
- DfE 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'
- DfE 'Sharing daily pupil attendance data'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board will have overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties including making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register and shares the required information with the DfE and LA.
- Ensuring the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.
- Ensuring attendance training forms part of the school's continuing professional development offer for all staff, with dedicated attendance training provided to staff who have a specified attendance function.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data, including recent and historic trends, benchmarking against appropriate comparator schools and local, regional and national data, and paying particular attention to pupil cohorts that face greater barriers to attendance.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Monitoring absence data and reporting it to the governors
- Issuing penalty notices where appropriate, or authorising a deputy to issue them, in accordance with the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the LA's Local Code of Conduct.
- Sharing information and working collaboratively with the LA by notifying them where a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school's admission register outside of standard transition times.

- Providing the LA, at the frequency agreed with the LA and no less frequently than once per calendar month, with the names and addresses of pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or who have been absent continuously for ten school days where their absence has been recorded using one or more of codes G, N, O and/or U.
- Providing the LA with a sickness return for any pupil of compulsory school age who is recorded with code I where there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will miss 15 school days consecutively or cumulatively during the school year because of sickness.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Working with parents of pupils with SEND to develop specific support approaches for attendance, including where school transport is regularly being missed and where pupils with SEND face barriers within school.
- Ensuring that a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker, where applicable, is informed of any unexplained absence.

Staff will be responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The Senior Attendance Champion:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance.
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence and ensuring these are followed by all staff.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data to identify patterns, priorities and pupils or cohorts requiring additional support.
- Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance strategies, processes and interventions.
- Working with pupils, parents, the LA and other relevant partners to remove barriers to attendance.

The school office/office manager will be responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance on a day-to-day basis and identifying unexplained or concerning absence.

- Contacting parents regarding absence and following up unexplained absence in line with the school's procedures.
- Maintaining accurate attendance records and supporting the accurate use of attendance codes.
- Communicating with pupils and families about attendance and helping to identify barriers to regular attendance.
- Escalating persistent, severe or otherwise concerning absence to the Senior Attendance Champion and supporting agreed interventions.

Pupils will be responsible for:

- Attending school regularly and attending all required sessions and activities.
- Arriving at school on time and being ready to learn.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents will be responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Notifying the school on the first day of an unexpected absence, providing the reason for the absence and advising when their child is expected to return.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

### **3. Definitions**

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

#### **Absence:**

- Not being present at school for a session where the pupil is required to attend and the absence is recorded using an appropriate absence code.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.

### **Authorised absence**

- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
- Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to part-time timetable
- Code D: Dual registered at another school
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded

### **Unauthorised absence (including but not limited to):**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

### **Persistent absence (PA):**

- Missing 10 percent or more of school sessions for any reason, equivalent to one day or more a fortnight across a full school year.

### **Missing education**

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

## Severe absence

- Missing 50 percent or more of school sessions for any reason.

## 4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

8.40 am Gates open – pupils can start to arrive at school

8.45 am Morning registration starts

8.50 am Morning registers are taken

9.15 am Morning registration closes

1.15 pm Afternoon registration starts

1.20 pm Afternoon registers are taken

3.15 pm End of the school day

**Pupils arriving after 8.40am** must go directly to registration. If they arrive after the register has been taken, they will be marked as late with the L code.

**Pupils arriving between 8.55am-9.15am** must go to the school office to sign in using the late book and provide a reason for their lateness. This information will be recorded on their attendance record and they will be marked as late with the L code.

In line with statutory guidance, **our registers will close at 9.15 am.**

**Pupils arriving after 9.15am** must go to the school office to sign in using the late book and provide a reason for their lateness. This information will be recorded on their attendance record and they will be **marked as late with the U code**. The U code shows that the pupil has attended school but is classed as an unauthorised absence for statistical purposes.

If a pupil is frequently marked as late with either the L code or the U code, we will contact their parent/carer to discuss the matter and identify any barriers that may require support. If a pupil is regularly marked as late with the U code, we will follow the process for pupils with regular unauthorised absence. Support will be offered, where it is needed, but continued unauthorised absences may lead to the Local Authority putting in place legal sanctions.

**Parents are always encouraged to contact our team to discuss any concerns about lateness and how improvements can be achieved.**

## Lateness

Pupils who arrive late frequently will miss important teaching, key information, registration activities, and valuable enrichment opportunities that support their learning and development. Late arrival can also disrupt lessons, affecting the concentration and progress of both the individual pupil and their peers. Furthermore, research indicates that persistent lateness can contribute to increased stress and anxiety for children, who may feel unsettled, self-conscious, or embarrassed when arriving after their classmates. Consistent punctuality is therefore essential in promoting positive wellbeing, engagement, and academic success. The table below shows the impact of being late frequently:

| If a pupil is late each day by... | ...they will miss this many days of teaching... | ...and this many lessons over a year |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 5 minutes                         | 3                                               | 15                                   |
| 10 minutes                        | 6                                               | 30                                   |
| 15 minutes                        | 9                                               | 45                                   |
| 20 minutes                        | 12                                              | 60                                   |
| 30 minutes                        | 18                                              | 90                                   |

## 5. Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone or email before **9:15am** on (01458) 443675 or email on [office@waltonprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@waltonprimary.co.uk) on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to provide a reason for the absence, a designated member of staff will contact the parent as soon as practicable on the first day of absence. Where absence continues without explanation, the school will make further contact with the parent and take appropriate steps to establish the pupil's whereabouts and ensure their safety.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

- Provide any further information to support your child's absence if requested to by our team.

When deciding whether a child is too ill to attend school, both parents and school staff can consider the advice contained with NHS guidance on illness and school attendance [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)

**If your child is absent, we will:**

1. Call you via telephone on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if you have failed to inform us of the reason for your child's absence.
2. If we are unable to contact you by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers and send letters home. In the interests of safeguarding all our pupils, a home visit may also be conducted.
3. A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents by the tenth consecutive day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), and we are unable to verify your whereabouts. At this point your child will be a Child Missing from Education (CME).

**If your child's absence continues, we will:**

1. send you a letter(s) outlining our concerns and expectations, and offering support,
2. arrange a meeting with you to discuss any barriers and understand how we can overcome them,
3. create a personalised plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child,
4. provide additional support in school to improve attendance,
5. offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate
6. refer the matter to the Local Authority for further support or relevant legal sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

The school will not routinely request medical evidence where a pupil is absent due to illness. Where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, the school may request appropriate supporting evidence. Where a parent cannot provide evidence in the form requested but can provide other evidence, the school will take this into account.

Where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, the school will work with the pupil and their parents to understand the barriers to attendance and agree appropriate actions or interventions. The school will support the day-to-day implementation of agreed actions, with the Senior Attendance Champion overseeing the school's strategic response and escalation where required.

The school will provide the LA, at the frequency agreed with the LA and no less frequently than once per calendar month, with the names and addresses of pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or who have been absent continuously for ten school days where their absence has been recorded using one or more of codes G, N, O and/or U.

The school will provide the LA with a sickness return for any pupil of compulsory school age who is recorded with code I where the school has reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil will miss 15 school days, consecutively or cumulatively, because of sickness. Only one sickness return will be required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year.

Where a pupil does not return from a period of leave or has a continuous period of absence, the school and the LA will carry out joint reasonable enquiries, where required under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, to establish the pupil's whereabouts. Where the pupil lives in a different local authority area, the School LA will liaise with the Home LA as appropriate. If, following reasonable enquiries, the pupil's name is lawfully removed from the school's admission register, the relevant LA will consider whether the pupil should be identified as a child missing education.

Where the school is unable to establish the reason for a pupil's absence and there are safeguarding concerns, the school will take appropriate action in line with its safeguarding procedures. The school will recognise that unexplained or prolonged absence from education can be a safeguarding warning sign.

## 6. Attendance register

The school uses **SIMs** to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session, at the same time for all registered pupils.

The register will record the appropriate national attendance or absence code for every pupil, reflecting whether they are attending the school, attending an approved educational activity or other permitted provision, absent, or unable to attend in accordance with the circumstances set out in the relevant regulations.

The school will use the national attendance codes set out in Regulation 10 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- # = planned whole-school closure
- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school for exceptional circumstances
- S = Study leave
- C1 = Leave of absence for participating in a regulated performance or employment abroad
- C2 = Leave of absence for part-time pupils
- E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
- J1 = Leave of absence for job or education interviews
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments

- K = Attending provision arranged by the LA
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason for absence not yet established; where the reason cannot be established within five school days, the school will amend the entry to Code O.
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Traveller absence
- Q = Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements, in accordance with the circumstances set out in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity, with supervision being physically provided by an appropriately trained and knowledgeable person
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y1 = Absent due to their regular transport not being available
- Y2 = Absent due to travel disruption
- Y3 = Absent due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 = Absent due to the school site being closed
- Y5 = Absent due to being in criminal justice detention
- Y6 = Absent due to public health guidance or law, despite the pupil being well enough to attend
- Y7 = Absent due to any other unavoidable cause, the nature of which must be documented by the school.
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

Where there is more than one afternoon session, and therefore the attendance register is taken more than once in the same afternoon, the DfE will use the codes from the last afternoon session as the basis for its statistical attendance data.

Pupils who are not physically attending school but are receiving remote education will continue to be recorded as absent using the appropriate absence code. Remote education will only be used in accordance with the

DfE's guidance, including as a last resort where appropriate and as part of a plan to reintegrate the pupil into school.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name of the person who made the amendment. The attendance register will only routinely be amended where the reason for absence could not be established when the register was taken and it subsequently becomes necessary to correct the entry.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for six years from the date the data was entered.

## **7. Authorising parental absence requests**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher. Each request will be considered individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context, as well as the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

### **Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher **in writing** at least **two weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation will not generally be considered an exceptional circumstance.

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

When considering a request, the school may take relevant factors into account, including the timing and duration of the proposed absence and the pupil's individual attendance circumstances; however, each application will be considered on its individual merits.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Illness and healthcare appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to request approval for their child's absence as far in advance as is practicable.

Leave for a medical or dental appointment will only be granted where an application is made in advance by a parent and the school is satisfied, based on the individual facts of the case, that exceptional circumstances justify the leave. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the minimum amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

## **Religious observance**

Parents will be expected to notify the school as far in advance as possible where their child will be absent for religious observance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

Where the relevant religious body sets apart only one day for a religious observance, only that day will be recorded using Code R. Any additional absence requested will be considered separately as a request for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

## **8. SEND- and health-related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health conditions, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. The school will maintain the same high ambition for their attendance as for all other pupils, while providing additional support and reasonable adjustments where needed.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

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.

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

- Inform the LA where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a pupil of compulsory school age will miss 15 school days, consecutively or cumulatively, because of sickness, and work with the LA to support continuity of education.
- 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.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Using a temporary, time-limited part-time timetable only in very exceptional circumstances where it is in the pupil's best interests, with parental agreement, regular review dates, a clear proposed end date and the aim of returning the pupil to full-time education as soon as possible. A part-time timetable will not be used to manage behaviour.
- 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.

Where a pupil subject to a part-time timetable has an EHC plan, the school will discuss the arrangement with the LA so that the pupil's support package can be reviewed as appropriate. Where the pupil has a social worker, the school will keep them informed and involved in the process.

The school will not routinely request medical evidence to support illness-related absence. Reasonable evidence may be requested where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, or where a pupil has prolonged or repeated illness and further information would help the school understand their needs, identify appropriate support or reasonable adjustments, or accurately record the absence. The school will not be rigid about the form of evidence requested and will consider other appropriate evidence provided by parents.

The Senior Attendance Champion will ensure that attendance data for pupils with SEND and/or long-term physical or mental health conditions is regularly monitored so that emerging patterns are identified and additional support from the LA or other partners can be accessed where necessary.

## **9. Attendance intervention**

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing and improving attendance, the Senior Attendance Champion will:

- Ensure appropriate interventions and support are available to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of attendance strategies and interventions, adapting them where necessary.

- Ensure that pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence and their parents are supported to understand and address barriers to attendance.
- Where absence intensifies, ensure that support is increased and that the school works with the LA and other relevant partners where appropriate.
- Where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with, oversee the school's work with the LA to formalise support or consider appropriate legal intervention.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to identify individual pupils and cohorts where patterns of absence are emerging and develop appropriate strategies to improve attendance. Interventions will take account of the particular needs and barriers of the pupils and families they are designed to support.

Where attendance rewards are used, the school will ensure they are applied sensitively and without discrimination and may recognise good attendance, punctuality and improvements in attendance.

Any attendance reward scheme will take account of individual circumstances and will be designed so that pupils who face additional barriers to attendance, including pupils with SEND, disabilities, health conditions or other significant circumstances, are not unfairly disadvantaged. Where appropriate, improvements in attendance or individual attendance goals may be recognised.

## **10. Working with parents to improve attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are **two** sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to understand and address the specific barriers to regular attendance. Where absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, or where engagement with support is proving challenging, the matter will be escalated to the Senior Attendance Champion, who may lead more formal discussions with the family and involve the LA School Attendance Support Team where appropriate. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with the Senior Attendance Champion and relevant school staff, such as the DSL and SENCO, to address them and arrange appropriate support or reasonable adjustments. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, the school will work with the pupil, parents, the LA and other relevant partners to help the family access appropriate support, which may include referrals to external services, early help or whole-family support.

Any agreed attendance support, actions or interventions will be regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents to assess their effectiveness and will be adapted where necessary to reflect the pupil's and family's circumstances.

## 11. Persistent absence

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

A pupil's absence can be represented using the table below:

| <b>An attendance level of...</b> | <b>...means a pupil will miss this many days...</b> | <b>... and this many lessons</b> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 100%                             | 0                                                   | 0                                |
| 95%                              | 10                                                  | 50                               |
| 90%                              | 19                                                  | 95                               |
| 80%                              | 39                                                  | 195                              |
| 50%                              | 95                                                  | 475                              |

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Pupils with a social worker, including children in need and pupils subject to child protection plans.
- LAC.
- Young carers.
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM.
- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils with physical or mental health conditions.
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination.
- Pupils from groups or backgrounds that have, or have historically had, lower attendance than their peers.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Regularly reviewing progress and the impact of support with the pupil and their parents
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will give particular priority to pupils who are severely absent, meaning they miss 50 percent or more of school. These pupils will be treated as a top priority for attendance support, and the school will work jointly with the LA and other relevant partners to identify and address the barriers to attendance and coordinate any intensive or whole-family support required.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

Where all appropriate avenues of support have been facilitated and any necessary educational support or provision has been put in place, but severe unauthorised absence continues, the school will recognise that this may constitute neglect. Any safeguarding concerns will be escalated in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including referral to children's social care where appropriate.

The Senior Attendance Champion will ensure that patterns of persistent and severe absence are a regular focus of the school's attendance monitoring so that individual pupils and cohorts requiring targeted support are identified as early as possible.

## **12. Safeguarding and attendance**

The school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedures.

However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional and sometime significant safeguarding issues, where absence may place pupils at additional risk.

In line with government guidance [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/keeping-children-safe-in-education) we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the LA and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when the school has made all reasonable enquiries and cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the pupil's welfare and safety.

## **13. Penalty notices and legal intervention**

The school will provide appropriate support to improve attendance wherever possible. Where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with, or where support is not appropriate in the circumstances, the Senior Attendance Champion will work with the LA to consider whether formal support or legal intervention is appropriate. Attendance legal intervention will only be used in relation to pupils of compulsory school age and will be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis. In particular, the Senior Attendance Champion will consider:

- Whether support is appropriate in the individual case and, where it is appropriate, whether sufficient support has been provided and has been successful or engaged with. Where support is not appropriate, e.g. in the case of an unauthorised term-time holiday, whether a penalty notice is appropriate in accordance with the National Framework and the LA's Local Code of Conduct.
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour, or if further support or other legal intervention is more appropriate.
- Whether issuing a penalty notice in this case is appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010, such as if the pupil has a disability.
- Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team.
- Working with the LA to consider putting an attendance contract or an Education Supervision Order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Where the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but has not been successful or engaged with, a Notice to Improve will usually be issued as a final opportunity for the parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. A Notice to Improve may not be used where support is not appropriate or where it is considered unlikely to have a behavioural impact. Any Notice to Improve will be issued in accordance with the LA's Local Code of Conduct and will normally provide an improvement period of between three and six weeks.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

Where a penalty notice is considered appropriate, it may be issued by the headteacher, a deputy headteacher authorised by the headteacher, an LA officer or the police. Any penalty notice will be issued in accordance with the LA's Local Code of Conduct and the National Framework for Penalty Notices.

Penalty notices can be issued to each parent individually, and in relation to each child whose absence has met the national threshold. Each penalty notice is for £160. In some cases, a reduced amount of £80 is payable if paid within 21 days.

Only two penalty notices may be issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil within a three-year rolling period. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where all other appropriate voluntary and formal support or legal interventions have failed, or where they have been deemed inappropriate in the circumstances, the school will work with the LA where prosecution is being considered as a last resort. Only the LA may prosecute parents for school attendance offences.

Where a parent is prosecuted for failing to secure their child's regular attendance, the penalties available to the court will depend on the offence. These may include a fine of up to £1,000 under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, or a fine of up to £2,500, a community order and/or imprisonment for up to three months under section 444(1A).

## **Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)**

Where voluntary support, including any appropriate early help and attendance contract, has not been successful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) may be considered as an alternative form of legal intervention without criminal prosecution. The school and LA will consider whether voluntary support has been exhausted and whether an ESO would be beneficial for the pupil and parent. The LA will fully consider the use of an ESO before progressing to prosecution.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the LA will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Where a parent persistently fails to comply with directions given under an ESO, they may be guilty of an offence and the LA may prosecute. On conviction, the parent may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000. Persistent non-compliance will also be considered with children's social care to determine whether further action is required to secure the pupil's welfare.

Once an ESO is secured, the LA will appoint an appropriate lead practitioner to act as supervisor. The school will work in partnership with the supervisor and provide support where appropriate.

## **14. Monitoring and analysing absence**

The Senior Attendance Champion will ensure that attendance and absence data is regularly monitored and analysed so that emerging patterns of poor attendance are identified and appropriate support or intervention is provided as early as possible.

Weekly attendance patterns and trends will be monitored at individual pupil, cohort and year-group level, including punctuality, to identify early indicators of poor attendance and enable timely support.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker, LAC, young carers, pupils with long-term health conditions and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence.

The Senior Attendance Champion will ensure that thorough analysis of attendance data is conducted on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic and emerging trends in attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The Senior Attendance Champion will provide regular attendance information and reports to relevant staff to support the tracking of individual pupils and the implementation of attendance procedures. The Senior Attendance Champion will monitor and evaluate the impact of attendance strategies and interventions, using the findings to adapt or inform future approaches.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including recent and historic trends and the attendance of pupil cohorts that face greater or entrenched barriers to attendance, and will support and challenge the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance improvement.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national data and, where appropriate, the performance of similar schools to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share effective practice with other schools.

## **15. Training of staff**

The school recognises that early identification and intervention are essential to preventing patterns of poor attendance from becoming entrenched. Staff will receive appropriate training to enable them to understand their role in improving attendance and to identify pupils who may require additional support.

The governing board will ensure that all staff receive appropriate attendance training as part of their induction and that attendance is included in the school's continuing professional development offer. Training will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect evolving barriers to attendance and the needs of the school community.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances
- The law and requirements relating to school attendance, including the keeping of attendance and admission registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will ensure that the Senior Attendance Champion and any other staff with specified attendance functions receive dedicated attendance training appropriate to their role. This will include the skills required to interpret and analyse attendance data and any additional training required to support pupils and families to overcome commonly experienced barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that patterns of absence, including persistent or severe absence and children missing education, may be an important warning sign of safeguarding concerns, and will know how to identify, report and respond to such concerns in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

## **16. Deletions of names from the admissions register**

The school will only delete a pupil's name from the admission register where a ground for deletion set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is met. Where a relevant ground for deletion is met, the pupil's name will be deleted as required by the Regulations. A pupil's name will not be removed for any other reason, as doing so could constitute off-rolling.

Where a pupil's name is deleted from the admission register, their name will also be deleted from the attendance register at the same time.

Where a pupil transfers to another school, the school will delete the pupil's name from its admission register as soon as the pupil is entered on the admission register of the new school, subject to any applicable exceptions under the Regulations. The school will continue to record the pupil's attendance and absence up to the date of deletion and will transfer the appropriate pupil information through the school-to-school (S2S) system.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

## 17. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is **96 percent** – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the **school website**.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **date**.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

## Appendix A - Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance

### All pupils

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

## 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:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p> | <p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting 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.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Hold a regular 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.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and 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.</p> |

## Persistently absent pupils

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

## Severely absent pupils

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                              | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                   | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p> | <p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |

## Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

| Parents are expected to: | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                            | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Not applicable.          | <p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p> | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. | Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools. |

## 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:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p> | Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it. | <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |

## 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:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are.</p> <p>Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort.</p> <p>Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.</p> | <p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p> | <p>Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it.</p> <p>Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance.</li> <li>• Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker.</li> <li>• Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.</li> </ul> |

## Looked after and previously looked after children

| Parents are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                | Schools are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Local authorities are expected to:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p> | <p>Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance.</p> <p>Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.</p> | <p>Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils.</p> <p>Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.</p> | <p>Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care.</p> <p>(LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school - wherever they live or are educated.</li> <li>• Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance.</li> <li>• Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance.</li> <li>• Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.</li> </ul> |

## Monitoring

| Parents:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Schools:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Academy trustees and governing bodies:                                                                                                                                               | Local authorities:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance.</p> <p>(If parents feel the school and/or local authority have not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)</p> | <p>The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures.</p> <p>The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance.</p> <p>Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p> | <p>DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making.</p> <p>Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.</p> | <p>DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction.</p> <p>Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services.</p> <p>Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.</p> |

## Appendix B - The Support-First Approach to Attendance

We have high aspirations for all our pupils. Where there are barriers to attendance, we will work with pupils, their families and other support services to ensure support is available to improve attendance. Where this support is not engaged with or fails, we will work with the Local Authority to consider formalised support and the appropriate use of statutory frameworks, including prosecution, to improve attendance.

This support-first framework forms part of the statutory guidance to support good school attendance.

| <b>EXPECT</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aspire to high standards of attendance for all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>MONITOR</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns or poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>FACILITATE SUPPORT</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.                                                                                                                         |
| <b>FORMALISE SUPPORT</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract of education supervision order. |
| <b>ENFORCE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the child's right to education.                                                                                                                                                |

## Appendix C - Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Walton CEVC Primary School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. A spreadsheet is sent to the Senior Attendance Champion SLT detailing **weekly** and **annual** attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers and pupils record their attendance in their planners. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the SLT.
3. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance officer daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established within five school days are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls to **96 percent**, the class teacher speaks to the pupil and parents to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance.
6. If a pupil's attendance falls below **96 percent**, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. The letter also has an attached leaflet outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to improve attendance.
7. If a pupil's attendance falls below **90 percent**, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the Senior Attendance Champion contacts the parents to discuss this.
8. The pupil's attendance is monitored for **two weeks** and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the classroom teacher and set targets for their child. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education welfare officer (EWO), who will then conduct a home visit.
9. After the **two-week** monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to **96 percent**.
10. If targets are not met, the classroom teacher makes a referral to the EWO. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A **four-week** monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents if there is no improvement after an additional **four weeks**, a fixed-penalty notice is issued.

## **Appendix D - Penalty Notices**

### **Information for Parents about Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absence from School**

Following the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised absences recorded after 19 August 2024. This information refers to penalty notices that are considered for irregular attendance and unauthorised term-time leave. All penalty notices are issued within the Somerset Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

#### **The Law**

Penalty notices are issued in line with Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 when a parent has failed to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. Penalty notices can only be issued when: ✓ A child's absence meets the national threshold ✓ Support has been attempted (if appropriate) ✓ Issuing a penalty notice is compliant with the Somerset Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

#### **Who can be fined?**

Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent/carer of each child whose unauthorised absence meets the national threshold. For example, in a family with two parents and three children taking unauthorised term-time leave, each parent could receive a penalty notice for each child absent from school, resulting in six penalty notices being issued.

#### **The National Threshold**

Schools are required to consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate when a child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. 10 sessions would typically be the equivalent of five days. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be a combination of any unauthorised absence codes (G, O, N or U). The rolling ten school week period can span terms, school years and schools.

#### **The First Offence**

The first time a parent is issued with a penalty notice in relation to a child's absence, they will be able to pay the reduced amount of £80 if they pay within 21 days, otherwise the full amount of £160 is payable within 28 days.

#### **The Second Offence**

If a parent is issued with a second penalty notice within three years the amount payable will be £160 within 28 days. The reduced amount will not be available.

#### **The Third Offence**

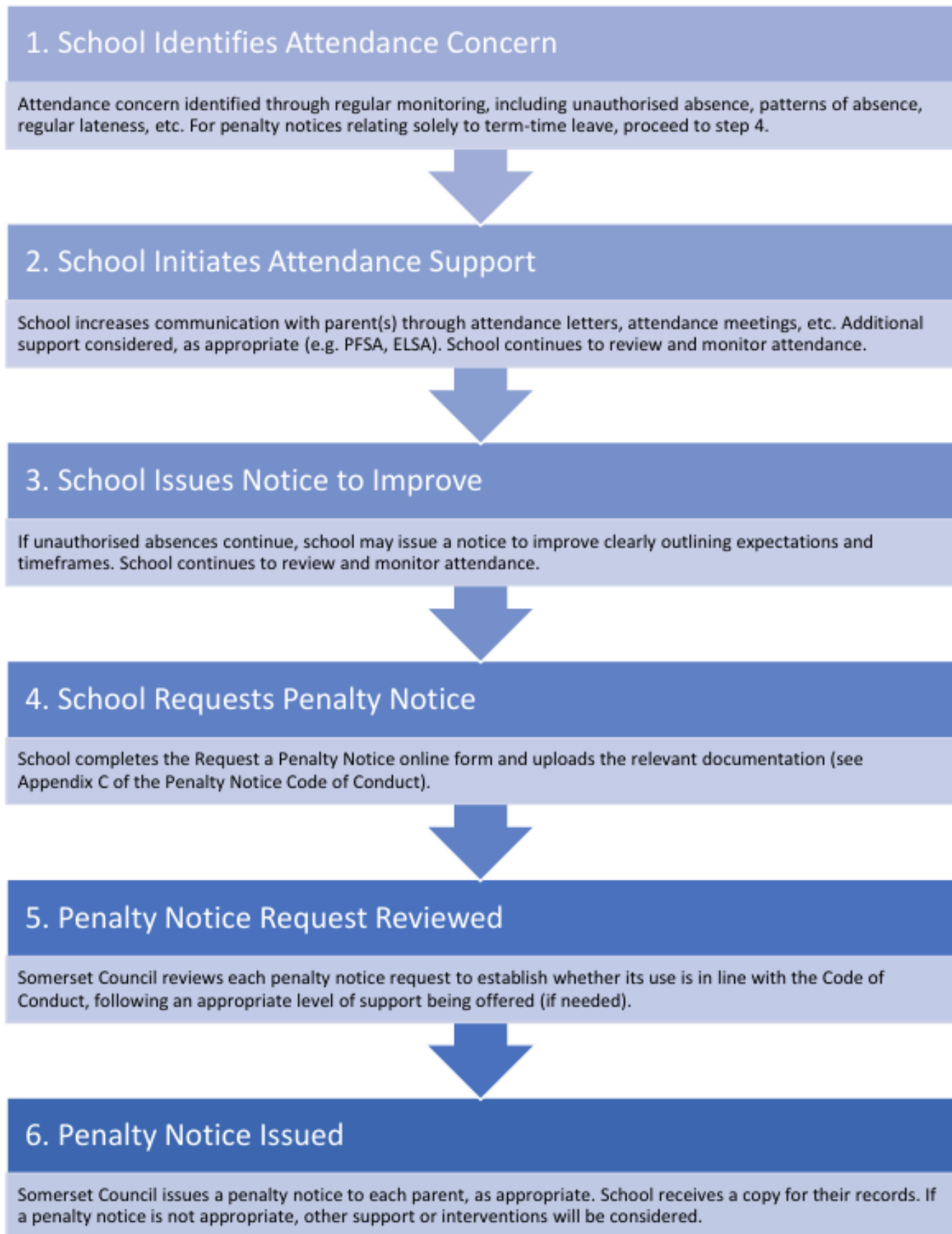
If a parent becomes eligible for a third (or more) penalty notice within three years of the first being issued, a penalty notice cannot be issued and the Local Authority will consider other measures to address attendance concerns. This may include prosecution, which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and the parent having a criminal record. If convicted, the offence will also show on any future DBS checks.

#### **Not Paying a Penalty Notice**

Penalty notices are only issued to parents when they have committed the offence of failing to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. A penalty notice gives the parent the chance to write the offence off

without needing to go to court. It is not an offence not to pay a penalty notice, but the Local Authority may then prosecute the parent for the original offence.

## Appendix E - Penalty Notice Flow Chart



## Appendix F - Procedure for Requesting a Penalty Notice

Penalty notices must be requested using the Request a Penalty Notice form within three school weeks and include the relevant attachments.

| Circumstance                                                                                                                                                                                   | Conditions Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Required with the Request                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>A child has 10 or more unauthorised term-time leave absences in a rolling 10 school week period.</p> <p>Section 444 of the Education Act 1996</p> <p><a href="#">Education Act 1996</a></p> | <p>10 or more unauthorised absences in a rolling 10 school week period that are G coded.</p> <p>The rolling 10 school week period can span more than one school term.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>✓ The request for leave (if made)</p> <p>✓ Letter from school advising that leave would/has not been authorised</p> <p>✓ The child's Registration Certificate showing the unauthorised absences as G codes</p> <p>✓ Any additional evidence that might support a decision to issue a Penalty Notice</p>                                                                             |
| <p>A child has 10 or more unauthorised absences in a rolling 10 school week period.</p> <p>Section 444 of the Education Act 1996</p> <p><a href="#">Education Act 1996</a></p>                 | <p>10 or more unauthorised absences in a rolling 10 school week period.</p> <p>Support has been offered and a Notice to Improve has been issued:</p> <p>✓ appropriate support has been offered in line with the child's needs,</p> <p>✓ the school has issued a Notice to Improve,</p> <p>✓ attendance has not improved,</p> <p>✓ a penalty notice will not compromise any support already in place. The rolling 10 school week period can span more than one school term.</p> | <p>✓ Evidence outlining the how the school has supported the child or their family to improve attendance, including: attendance concern letters and an attendance agreement</p> <p>✓ The child's Registration Certificate showing at least 10 unauthorised absences in the 10-week period</p> <p>✓ A copy of the Notice to Improve issued during the rolling 10 school week period</p> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>A child has been present in a public place during school hours while suspended or excluded without reasonable justification.</p> <p>Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006</p> <p><a href="#">Education and Inspections Act 2006</a></p> | <p>A child is seen to have been in a public place without reasonable justification during a time when they are suspended or excluded from school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ the child was formally suspended or excluded at the time</li> <li>✓ the child was seen during normal school hours</li> <li>✓ when seen, the child did not seem to be in public for any justifiable reason (e.g. attending a medical appointment).</li> </ul> <p>For the purposes of this legislation, the school is not considered to be a public place.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A signed statement on headed paper outlining: who has written the statement and their relationship to the child, the date, time and location the child was seen to be in public, what they appeared to be doing, that the child was suspended or excluded at the time they were seen</li> <li>✓ The formal suspension or exclusion letter</li> <li>✓ The child's Registration Certificate showing relevant suspension or exclusion (E codes)</li> <li>✓ Any additional evidence that might support a decision to issue a penalty notice</li> </ul> |
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