



Linby cum Papplewick  
Church of England Primary School



DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL  
& NOTTINGHAM  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

# **Attendance Policy**

## **Linby cum Papplewick C of E Primary School**

### **September 2024**

Love life, love learning, grow in faith.

## Statement of Intent

At Linby cum Papplewick C of E Primary School we aspire to cultivate the gifts and talents of every child and equip them with the wisdom, knowledge and skills to live life in all its fullness: its joys and celebrations, its sorrows and struggles.

*“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11)*

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents. We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

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

Linked Christian Values: Love, Dignity, Wisdom, Community, Hope.

The school's attendance officer is Mrs Flint who can be contacted via [office@lcp.snmat.org.uk](mailto:office@lcp.snmat.org.uk). Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

Signed by

Headteacher:

Chair of Governors:

Review date-

## 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The named safeguarding governor will:

- Meet with the headteacher every half term
- Monitor attendance data for the whole school and emerging patterns for groups of children or individuals

### **3.2 The Headteachers**

The Headteachers are responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, or authorising the others to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion') is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance are the Headteachers and can be contacted via 0115 9634 2852 /office@lcp.snmat.org.uk

### **3.4. Class Staff**

Class staff are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office:

- Morning registration must be completed at 8.50am
- Afternoon registration must be completed at 1.15pm.
- Contribute to and support the continued development of the warm, welcoming, exciting and safe environment for all children
- Welcome each child into the class by name and with a smile
- Promote and reward good attendance at all opportunities
- Welcome children who have been absent with warmth – “it's great to see you – we have missed you and I am really pleased you are better/back” and never say “Where have you been? You have missed so much work....”
- Be aware of absences of each child or patterns in absence in their group and make sure the child is supported in catching up missed work
- Support children with attendance targets by completing interventions / incentives
- Communicate with colleagues where necessary if there are any issues resulting from the absence that other staff should know (concern about work missed, response of other children, possible responses of colleagues) but also where there are possible safeguarding concerns reporting to the school's DSL
- Notify the Headteachers if there is any suggestion of term time holiday

### **3.5. Office Staff**

Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the headteachers, SENCO where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Notify the DSL if there are any contextual safeguarding issues which might explain erratic or poor attendance
- Contribute to and support the continued development of the warm, welcoming, exciting and safe environment for all children
- Greet the children by name and always with a smile and a greeting
- Make a special effort to provide a warm welcome to children returning with anxiety issues
- If necessary, walk the child to the lesson etc. if this is a cause of anxiety
- Reassure families that the school will monitor the child's welfare carefully during the course of the day and communicate with the family if there are any issue

### **3.6. Parents**

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (or email) and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when their child is expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Where not possible, inform the school of the child's absence in advance by emailing or phoning the school office.
- If their child's absence rates are increasing and are causing concern, an attendance contract may be used to support parents to make improvements.
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the headteachers, SENDcO through the office 0115 9634282 or office@lcp.snmat.org.uk

### **3.7. Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

## **4. Recording Attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

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

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

The school day starts at 8:50am (with doors opening at 8:40am) and ends at 3:30pm. Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:50am and will be kept open until 9:20am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:15pm and will be kept open until 1:20pm.

#### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by emailing or calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 0115 9634 282.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 2 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

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

Parents can notify the school of a medical or dental appointment by emailing the school office: [office@lcp.snmat.org.uk](mailto:office@lcp.snmat.org.uk)

Notify the school of:

- the reason for the absence
- the length of their absence
- when the child is expected to return to school

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

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

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (9.20am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed (9.21am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Incidents of lateness are reported to the headteacher daily. Patterns of lateness are track half-termly and report to the governing body.

- Parents of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of punctuality and how this might be achieved:
- Parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss the cause of lateness with the headteacher and support will be offered.
- If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, a penalty notice will be issued in accordance with Nottinghamshire Improving School Attendance Toolkit for issuing penalty notices for non-attendance

Parents must collect their child promptly at the end of the school day:

- Where late collection is persistent (after 3:45) or significantly after 4.00pm as a one-off, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns, as necessary, with other agencies.
- The school will place a child into the after school club and provide the parent/carer with the bill.



- If a child is not collected by 4.15pm, and a parent cannot be contacted, the school will contact Children's Services as this is a safeguarding concern.

#### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may complete a home visit, contact Children's Services or the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer or social worker.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels:

- Red – persistent absence, 10% or more, serious concern
- Amber – cause for concern, 4% - 9%, requires immediate improvement
- Green – good attendance, 0% - 3%

At Parent Consultations held in October and March  
End-of-year report

### **5 Authorised and unauthorised absence**

#### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

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

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

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview

- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as unexpected, unavoidable, and outside of your control, such as hospitalisation, a serious illness or a bereavement of a close relative. A leave of absence must still be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with.

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday or celebration (including a wedding or birthday celebration).

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website or school office. The headteachers may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school

premises are closed

## **5.2 Sanctions**

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

### **Penalty notices**

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

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

- If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.
- If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

### **Notices to improve**

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance in our regular newsletter and on our website
- Report to you how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
- Set targets for the school and display these in the newsletter
- Deliver a stimulating and engaging curriculum that encourages children's enjoyment of school
- Run events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school

## **7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school**

### **7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance**

- The Headteachers, parents, class teacher and SENDCo will meet to identify the barriers to good school attendance. If appropriate, the child's views will also be gathered.
- An attendance contract may be put in place to support progress towards improved attendance.
- School-based interventions may be offered: ELSA, Thrive, a consultation with Primary Behaviour Support, soft starts, protected play, a time-limited part-time timetable so the child can build success, Emotionally-based School Avoidance resources
- External Interventions may be offered: referrals to Primary Behaviour Support, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Early Help/Family Support Services
- A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and the class staff
- Guardian Angel: a child will be appointed as their guardian angel. The guardian angel will support the child through the day with academic and social interactions.

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

- Headteacher, parents, class teacher and SENDCo will meet to identify the barriers to good school attendance. If appropriate, the child's views will also be gathered.
- If appropriate, the attendance policy will be implemented alongside the Children with Health Needs who cannot attend School and Children with Medical Conditions policies.
- Identify a key adult to work with the child and the family using Nottinghamshire's Emotionally-based School Avoidance resources to explore the positive and negative influences on absenteeism and build resilience.
- School-based interventions may be offered: ELSA, Thrive, a consultation with Primary Behaviour Support, soft starts, protected play, animal-assisted education sessions, a time-limited part-time timetable so the child can build success
- External Interventions may be offered: referrals to Primary Behaviour Support, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Early Help/Family Support Services
- A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and the class staff
- Parents will be signposted to the parent support circle
- Guardian Angel: a child will be appointed as their guardian angel. The guardian angel will support the child through the day with academic and social interactions.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

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

As soon as parents have informed the school of the expected date of return:

- Class teacher will organise a welcome pack back for the child to receive before they return. It may include:
  - messages from the class,
  - timetable for their first day back,
  - a reading book
- A Headteacher will meet with the parents (and child if appropriate) in advance of the first day to discuss expectations, reasonable adjustments and individual health care/My Support Plans that may be in place
- Soft start: parents/child will be given the option to arrive through the school office, where the child will be welcomed by an adult known to them.
- Guardian Angel: a child will be appointed as their guardian angel. The guardian angel will support the child through the day with academic and social interactions.
- A home-school book will be established to maintain clear communication between the parents and the class staff
- ELSA or Thrive sessions will be available to support the child's return.

## **8. Attendance monitoring**

### **8.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

## **8.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## **8.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

## **8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed (9:00am, 1:20pm)
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	K Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance



I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		

Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix 2: Practical ideas for challenging and improving attendance checklist for schools

First day telephone calls/home visits questioning reason for absence and offering advice/supportive challenge	
Letters sent to all parents share attendance concern?	
Have you spoken to the class teacher?	
Has someone spoken to the Young person to establish the reason/hear their voice?(age /ability dependent)	
Have you met with the parents/carers and asked why the child isn't attending school? Do these reasons match with the reason the child provided?	
Have family circumstances been considered and have you considered with the family what support may help them at this time? Have any referrals to other agencies been offered?	
If regularly late, has the school start time been shared with parents. Have you provided them with an alarm clock/used a sticker chart etc Would the child benefit from attending breakfast club to ensure they are on school site on time each day? Would being met at the school gate help?	
Checked to see if siblings are having the same absences. Have you contacted the school the siblings attend?	
Have you spoken to other staff members to ascertain any other reasons for absence? Look at the patterns on 'by-day attendance', and if patterns are evident speak the parents?	
Is the child a Young Carer, and is this having an impact on their attendance?	
Consider if there are any unmet learning needs?	
Is English the second language for this family? Have letters and meetings been translated to allow fair access to school concerns for parents?	
If EHCP in place are the outcomes being supported, when was this last reviewed?	
Has the child's health been considered, have you received any medical evidence?	
If external services are involved has a meeting taken place? E.g., TAF, CIN. If there is a lead professional from EHCM, YOS, CAMHS or CSC they should be consulted before an enforcement referral is made.	
Where absence is attributed to anxiety or young persons mental health have support mechanism been put in place e.g. ARNA, ATTEND, MHST	

### **Appendix 3: Holding a Structured Conversation with a Parent about their child's attendance at school**

- Hello [Parent's name].
- I am [caller's name] from [school name]. How are you doing today?
- I'm calling because, just like you, we want to do all we can to be sure [child's name] is successful in school and one way we can help make this happen is to be sure [s/he] gets to school each day.
- When [child's name] misses school [s/he] also misses valuable learning time and this can make [her/him] fall behind in [her/his] school work.
- Our attendance records show that [child's name] has missed [number] days of school.
- Sometimes these absences add up before we know it so I thought I'd call to see if you might be able to help us out.
- How can we work together to get [child's name] to school each day and on time? Give parent time to talk; parent may begin to talk about ways the parent can do things differently to get child to school.

Open discussion: depending on how the conversation is going and how open the parent is, the caller may want to add a comment about how we all face daily pressures, and we want to help support you any way we can

- We would like to invite you to a meeting in school to discuss any barriers to attendance and how we can help as a school. If there are multiple support needs and you consent to support, we would like to discuss referring your family for Early Help Support. This will include a full assessment leading to a robust plan of support.
- If you don't wish to consent to support and the unauthorised absences continue, we may need to make an enforcement only referral to the Local Authority. This is because we have a statutory duty to work with the LA to enforce school attendance. We obviously wish to avoid this option and hope to work together to improve your child's attendance.
- If (in the future) your child is absent due to illness, we ask that you provide medical evidence so that the absence can be authorised by school.
- School registers close (half an hour?) after the start of each session. If your child arrives after the registers have closed then they are accruing an unauthorised absence.
- My staff and I are here to help, and we look forward to working with you.
- Please don't hesitate to let me know how we can be helpful to you and [child's name] so [s/he] doesn't miss more school.
- Thanks for taking time to talk today. I look forward to seeing [child's name] soon

**Send an attendance certificate home and consider summarising your conversation in a letter**

## Appendix 4: Attendance Contract Template

<b>Date / Time of meeting</b>	
<b>Venue</b>	

<b>Pupil name:</b>	
<b>Date of birth:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>School:</b>	
<b>Present at meeting:</b>	

<b>What is the pupil's current absent rate/Pattern:</b>	
<b>Please describe the reasons for the pupil's absences, (any barriers to attendance, support needs)</b>	

<b>Action agreed for School</b>
<b>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School will alter pupil's timetable on a temporary basis,</li> <li>• School will refer pupil to MHST.</li> </ul>

<b>Action agreed for Parent / carer</b>
<b>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon pupil's return.</li> <li>• Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur.</li> </ul>

<b>Action agreed for pupil</b>
<b>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil will arrive at school by 8.40 a.m. every day Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly, school staff will be informed?</li> </ul>

Attendance target:	100%
Timescale for improvement:	
Date for review meeting:	

I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed:

..... Parent/carer

..... Pupil

..... School Representative

..... Other Agency

## Appendix 5: Example Letters

### Penalty Warning Letter for Leave of absence taken in term time

Linby cum Papplewick C of E Primary School  
Quarry Lane  
Linby  
NG15 8GA

April 2023

Mr XXX & Ms XXX XXX  
Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

PENALTY NOTICE WARNING Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

I note your application to take ..... out of education for .... days to go on holiday.

Schools are only allowed to agree a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances.

I have considered your application and do not feel it meets the exceptional circumstances criteria and therefore your request has been declined. Should you decide to remove your child from school on the dates indicated in your application then their absence will be marked in the register as unauthorised.

An unauthorised leave of absence of 5 days/10 sessions (over a 10-week rolling period) for the purpose of a family holiday can lead to you being issued with a penalty notice fine of up to £160 for each child who is absent. The fines can be issued to both parents for each child.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for (child's name) over a 3-year rolling period.

If you do remove ..... from school for the period stated in your application I will request that the local authority issues a penalty notice.

Yours sincerely,

Ms XXX XXXX  
Assistant Principal

## Example of Penalty Warning Notice for Unauthorised Absence

Linby cum Papplewick C of E Primary School  
Quarry Lane  
Linby  
NG15 8GA

April 2023

Mr XXX & Ms XXX XXX  
Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

**PENALTY NOTICE WARNING** Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

The registers at X Academy show that, to date, your child has missed X days (X sessions) of school due to unauthorised absences over the last X weeks.

You, as parent, have legal responsibility under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. As such unless your child's attendance improves you will be referred to the local authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for (child's name) over a 3-year rolling period.

Should your child (Insert name) any further absence which result in them having 5 days (10 sessions) over a 10-week rolling period we will request that the local authority issue a penalty notice of up to £160 for each child who is absent. The notice can be issued to both parents/carers for each child whose absence meets the Penalty Notice threshold.

Please take immediate steps to ensure your child gets to school on time every day and obtain medical evidence if he/she is too ill to attend. Any other reason for absence should be discussed with the school and it is the school's decision whether to authorise any absence that is not covered by medical evidence.

Yours sincerely

Mr XXX XXXX

Assistant Principal



## Example letter advising parent that school have requested a penalty notice

Linby cum Papplewick C of E Primary School  
Quarry Lane  
Linby  
NG15 8GA

Our Ref:

April 2023

Mr XXX & Ms XXX XXX  
Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

On (Date) we wrote to you to explain that the .....Academy would not authorise.....  
(child name) absence from school for ..... days for a holiday.

We also informed you that this could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued to you.

I am now writing to advise you that a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue a  
Penalty Notice for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more  
suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods. This would include  
circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines for (child's name) over a 3-year  
rolling period.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr xxxxxxxxx

Assistant Principal

## Example letter advising parent that school are concerned about attendance

Our Ref:

Linby cum Papplewick C of E Primary School  
Quarry Lane  
Linby  
NG15 8GA

Our Ref:

April 2023

Mr XXX & Ms XXX XXX  
Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

Child X (DOB)

Your child XXX's attendance is a cause of concern at XX%. I am writing to bring this to your attention in order that we might work together to improve this. I enclose an attendance certificate for your information. I am proposing a school meeting/ home visit/telephone discussion (delete as appropriate) to further discuss ways we can support your child.

Should our joint efforts to improve attendance be unsuccessful the school may decide to refer for enforcement action.

Yours sincerely

Mr xxxxxxxxx

Assistant Principal

## Example letter – School Attendance Notice to Improve

Linby cum Papplewick C of E Primary School  
Quarry Lane  
Linby  
NG15 8GA

Our Ref:

(Please read this letter carefully)

April 2023

Mr XXX & Ms XXX XXX  
Meadow Lane  
Nottingham  
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

School attendance is hugely important. For your child to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, wellbeing, and wider development, they need to attend on time, every day possible.

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school or fails to attend regularly the child's parent may be guilty of an offence under s.444 Education Act 1996. If your child is a registered pupil at an alternative provision in the circumstances set out in section 444ZA of the Education Act 1996, the child's parent may be guilty of an offence.

You, «FORENAME» «SURNAME» are a parent/carer of «Students\_Name», (called in this notice "the pupil") who is a registered pupil at «School\_Name».

The school have offered support to you and your family to try and help improve «Students\_Name»'s attendance, including (delete as appropriate):

1. Telephone calls. The school contacted you every day your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer their support with any issues your child may be having.
2. An Attendance Overview Letter. The school wrote to you, letting you know about «Students\_Name»'s attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
3. An Attendance Support Meeting Invite. The school invited you to a meeting to discuss your child's unauthorised absences and to offer support to ensure that their attendance improved. You were notified of the consequences should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and you did not effectively engage with the support offered.
4. Reasonable Adjustments. The school offered your child temporary changes to their normal timetable to support improved attendance,

5. Improving Attendance Contract. The school agreed a contract with you to improve your child's attendance. This included actions that both the school and you as a parent committed to.

6. Referrals to external agencies: The school referred your child to external agencies so they could access additional support.

### **School Attendance Notice to Improve**

Unfortunately, despite the support that was offered to your family, attendance remains a cause for concern. Between «WARNING\_START\_DATE» and «WARNING\_END\_DATE» the pupil failed to attend regularly at «School\_Name», which resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.

You now have twenty school days (4 weeks) in which to improve your child's attendance.

During this time your child must show significant improvements in attendance and avoid having any unauthorised absences from school during this period. Should we not see sufficient improvement and further unauthorised absences take place during this period, a Penalty Notice may be issued / a referral may be made to the Local Authority requesting they issue you with a Penalty Notice. A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is usually the opportunity to pay a reduced amount of £80 if paid within 21 days if this is the first offence.

NB – A Penalty Notice may be issued as soon as an unauthorised absence is recorded. More information regarding this notice can be found in the attached leaflet. If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss what further support is available, please contact our team as soon as possible:

Contact Name

Name of Team/Service

Address

Telephone:

Yours sincerely

(Name)

(Job Title)

(School Name)

## Appendix 6: Missed time in school

### Every day counts

<b>100% attendance</b>	<b>0 days missed</b>	<b>No learning missed!</b>
<b>97% attendance</b>	<b>5 days missed</b>	<b>A weeks learning missed</b>
<b>94% attendance</b>	<b>12 days missed</b>	<b>2 weeks and 2 days learning missed</b>
<b>90% attendance</b>	<b>19 days missed</b>	<b>3 weeks and 4 days learning missed</b>
<b>85 % attendance</b>	<b>30 days missed</b>	<b>6 weeks of learning missed</b>
<b>80% attendance</b>	<b>40 days missed</b>	<b>8 weeks of learning missed</b>

### Every minute counts

<b>Always on time!</b>	<b>No hours missed!</b>	<b>No learning missed!</b>
<b>5 minutes late each day</b>	<b>15 hours missed</b>	<b>3 days learning missed</b>
<b>10 minutes late every day</b>	<b>32 hours missed</b>	<b>6.5 days learning missed</b>
<b>20 minutes late each day</b>	<b>65 hours missed</b>	<b>13 days learning missed</b>
<b>30 minutes late each day</b>	<b>95 hours missed</b>	<b>19 days learning missed</b>