Growing Together, Shining Forever

Church Aston Infant School

Attendance Policy

September 2026

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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: July 2026 (Department for Education, July 2026), 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 ensure 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: July 2026 (Department for Education, July 2026)and school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended

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 body

The governing body 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 pupil's 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 pupil's needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure 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 children, 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
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools via the Cluster Schools and EWO
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Governors will receive regular attendance reports which include attendance trends, persistent absence, severe absence and attendance of identified vulnerable groups. Governors will provide challenge and support to ensure attendance remains a strategic priority for the school.

Our governor with responsibility for attendance is Sharon Hislop.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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 attendance of vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker, previously looked after children and young carers.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the School Attendance Administrator to be able to do so in conjunction with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

- 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 parents drop off 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 (Headteacher)

The designated senior leader 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 data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance with the attendance officer
- 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
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Sarah Pitt and can be contacted via the school office 01952 386390 or at A2033@taw.org.uk

3.4 The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer is responsible for:

- Making contact with parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is causing concern.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing support to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Kiran Kang and can be contacted via the school office.

3.5 Class teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.
- Morning registers must be taken by 8:45am and afternoon registers by 1:00pm.
- Class teachers are responsible for reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take and record calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis.

- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the headteacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. We may request proof of date and time for any appointments during school time.

3.8 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:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, 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 8.40am and ends at 3.15pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day.
The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.15am. If your child arrives after 8.45am they will be given an L code and if they arrive after 9.15am they will receive a U code, which is unauthorised. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.15am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office on 01952 386390, (there is an answer phone facility if the call is not answered immediately), or by email at A2033@taw.org.uk leaving a message stating:

- The child's name and year group;
- Reason for absence and nature of illness;
- Likely length of absence if known.

If no contact is received from the parents/carers on the first morning of absence, we will follow 'First day contact' procedures and contact the parent by telephone or e-mail. Please do not be alarmed if we call to check on your absent child's progress for our records. You may also receive a call from Education Welfare as part of their routine duties and safeguarding procedures.
We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
The school may request reasonable evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt regarding the authenticity of an illness absence, where patterns of repeated absence are emerging, or where evidence would help the school better understand and support a pupil's health needs. Medical evidence will only be requested where it is proportionate and necessary and will not routinely be requested for every illness absence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers 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/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents/carer should come to the school office or email and where possible, show the appointment card/letter.
However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using an L code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (see appendix 1)

If punctuality is becoming a regular occurrence, parents will receive a letter making them aware of the impact this could have on their child's education, or they may receive a phone call to see if any support is needed to get their child to school on time. If there is no improvement after support has been given, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will become involved.

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:

- Contact the pupil's parent/carer 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 contact the Education Welfare Officer and where necessary, Family Connect and/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 for which the pupil was absent. If no reason can be ascertained, then the absence will be unauthorised.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the Education Welfare Officer. If we are concerned about any safeguarding issues, we will contact Family Connect or the Police.
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with we will issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.
For pupils who are between 92% - 90%, parents will receive a letter informing them of the attendance percentage and explaining that they are close to becoming a 'Persistent Absentee'. The letter will reiterate the importance of school attendance and offer support, if required.
For pupils who are below 90%, parents will receive a letter informing them that their child is known as a 'Persistent Absentee' and that this must improve to ensure the pupil's education is not affected. The letter informs them that the Education Welfare Officer is now monitoring, and parents may get a phone call or home visit to discuss the absences with them and next steps if attendance does not improve.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.
The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the 2024 school attendance regulations. These circumstance are:

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

- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstance

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.
As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.
The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, available via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.
Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parents 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 headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of

compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice. A penalty notice will be issued on behalf of the school by the local authority.
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 children 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.

In July 2026 the DfE reviewed and amended the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' statutory guidance. This guidance sits alongside the 'National Framework for Penalty Notices' which the Government introduced in August 2024 and 'The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024' and the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

In Telford & Wrekin it is the delegated responsibility of the Attendance Support Team to issues Penalty Notices following referrals from schools, and only they can issue Penalty Notices relating to school absence.

It is only the Headteacher (or delegated member of School Staff) who has the discretion to authorise any request for leave in term time and it is also they that decide the duration of that leave. Parents must submit a request for leave in term time to the school, allowing ample time for consideration to be given. Any circumstances that parents wish to be considered should be included in the request. Holidays should not be booked before permission is granted. The legislation does not allow for any school to adopt a blanket ban, all requests for leave in term time will be considered to determine if there are exceptional circumstances and parents must be notified of that decision.

The government introduced changes in legislation from August 2024 that parents need to be aware of:

- If your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 school week rolling period, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. These 10 sessions may include any unauthorised absence, including leave in term time and sessions do not have to be consecutive.

- If in an individual case the local authority believes a Penalty Notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met, so for eight sessions of unauthorised absence. This might apply for example, when parent(s) are deliberately or purposefully avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for events such as birthdays and taking their child out of school, or when there are only four pupil days in school and the fifth day is for example a PD day or bank holiday
- Penalty Notices increased to £160 from August 2024. This can be reduced to £80 but only for the first Penalty Notice issued, if paid within 21 days – this reduction does not apply to any subsequent Penalty Notice.
- Any 2nd Penalty Notice, to the same parent for the same child, issued within three years of the date of the first Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160
- A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three-year rolling period, to the same parent for the unauthorised absence of the same child, - alternative action or legal measures will be utilised for subsequent offences.
- Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. as is usually the case for an unauthorised holiday in term time).
- In some circumstances a 'Notice to Improve' may be issued – However, a Notice to Improve will only be used in cases where support is appropriate. They will not be issued in cases of unauthorised leave in term time for holidays, where information for parents is included in schools' attendance policy and on school's website, or a warning by the school that a Penalty Notice could be issued if unauthorised leave in term time is taken will suffice.

'Parents should always apply to the Headteacher for any request for leave in term time by completing a request form available from the school. (DfE guidance states schools should not authorise leave retrospectively so any leave in term time taken without a request being submitted will be unauthorised absence)'.

In developing and publishing the National Framework, the Government renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors and Headteacher of this school support this initiative. The legislation does not allow for blanket bans, therefore all requests for leave in term time will be considered. However, in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, DfE guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance - July 2026, National Framework for Penalty Notices 2024 and local Code of Conduct, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. The DfE Guidance- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (amended July 2026) states that: Generally, the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. (Paragraph 37.)

Each application for leave in term time will be considered and if it is agreed and authorised the Headteacher will determine the duration of any leave. However, if the application is not agreed and the absence occurs the dates will be unauthorised. Parents will be notified of any decision in writing. This notification may be hand delivered directly to the parent, emailed to the registered email address of the parent held on school records or posted to the parents' home address.

As a school we are asked to inform you that in line with Telford and Wrekin Council Policy, if your child is absent for 10 school sessions within a 10 week rolling period and that absence is unauthorised, you may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine, criteria is as detailed above.

Please follow the links below for more detailed information:

Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/back-into-school/resources-for-families/



Leave of Absence Leaflet - Sept 26 Upd

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

At Church Aston Infant School we use many strategies to promote good attendance. These include:

- School attendance figures and punctuality are shared monthly on the school newsletter.
- We celebrate very good and excellent attendance by issuing certificates every term and at the end of the year.
- We celebrate improved attendance with certificates given to pupils every term.
- Information on attendance is published on the school website.
- We build relationships with parents/carers to help improve their child's attendance by inviting them in for meetings.
- We support parents/carers by requesting school nurse or community nurse involvement if a child's attendance is affected by illness. This is primarily to offer support to the family and to give them strategies to improve their child's attendance.
- Staff members model personal punctuality.
- All pupils are greeted by a member of staff in the morning, to give pupils a warm welcome.
- The school regularly holds school uniform sales and hold a stock from school donations, to help parents/carers who can't afford to purchase new items.
- We offer safe spaces around school and make sure the children know they can talk to any adult if they're experiencing any issues e.g. challenges with their friends, anxiety etc and that they will be supported.
- Newport Cluster Schools have an Education Welfare Officer and Family Support Worker who can support children who are reluctant to attend school.
- The headteacher includes importance of attendance during new intake induction meeting.

The school recognises that absence is often a symptom of wider barriers experienced by children and families. We aim to identify barriers early, listen to and understand concerns, and work with families in a supportive and respectful manner before considering formal intervention.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Where pupils have been absent from school for a significant period of time or absent for complex reasons, we will work with parents, carers, pupils and other agencies to support a return to school. This will involve:

- Arranging meetings prior to a return to understand needs and concerns to alleviate anxiety. Class teachers and teaching assistants will be involved to understand any special requirements.
- Where other agencies are involved, they will be consulted to aid any specialist arrangements or training needs.
- An individual action plan will be drawn up to aid the return process; this may be a phased return.
- A realistic plan for catching up on any missed work will be made and monitored.
- Regular meetings will be arranged with the pupil, parents and/or carers to evaluate progress and moving forwards.

Where absence is linked to a pupil's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), mental health needs or medical condition, the school will work in partnership with parents,

carers and relevant professionals to identify barriers to attendance and implement reasonable adjustments. Time-limited phased returns may be considered where appropriate as part of a planned reintegration process.

Remote education will only be considered as a temporary measure and a last resort where a pupil is unable to attend school. Where remote education is used, a clear reintegration plan will be developed to support the pupil's return to full-time attendance as soon as possible.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

At Church Aston Infant School we monitor attendance regularly:

- Weekly attendance monitoring by the School Business Manager and Headteacher, looking at trends and recording any persistently absent pupils, including actions for PA pupils. The school EWO will be contacted to support with letters, home visits and fines where needed.
- We monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly with our Education Welfare Officer.
- The headteacher and governor with responsibility for attendance, undertake termly Targeted Support meetings with our Local Authority Attendance Advisor.
- Termly and yearly data across school is monitored at individual, year group and cohort level including SEND, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with a social worker, young carers and pupils who are persistently or severely absent. The headteacher shares attendance data of the school and groups with governors during the Governing Board meetings each term.
- Our school uses information from the DfE to compare and benchmark against other schools in the local authority and the country.
- Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Church Aston Infant School shares attendance data with the DfE and the LA, through our management information system.
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, targeting whole school attendance, persistent absences and severe absences based on year-on-year data for the school to identify focus areas for improvement. This will be shared with the governing board, along with attendance data for year groups and vulnerable groups.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- 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
- Analyse attainment data against attendance data to monitor the impact. This will be shared with parents to ensure they understand the impact that lower attendance is having on their child's education

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, DSL's, and governing board to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- 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 (PA) is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence (SA) 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
- Send letters to parents of children who are Persistent Absentees or getting close to becoming a PA so they are aware and offer support, if required
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or 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, 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)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually, by the Headteacher and the Attendance Governor. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:
Child protection and safeguarding policy
Behaviour policy
Leave in Term Time Policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on a 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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective

		employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstance	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil 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: o In police detention o Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or o Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session

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

Appendix 2: SAC School Attendance Concern template letter

The reason we will send these letters out is to highlight to parents that attendance could trigger EWO input as it is close to 90% which hits the persistent absentee trigger point. Please do not be alarmed at receiving these, they are more to keep you informed about your child's attendance. We will try to update you when your child's attendance improves.

Name **Date**

Address **Ref: SAC1**

Dear

Students Name: **Attendance Percentage** %.

Attending school is essential for our pupils to make good progress, achieve their academic potential and consequently have better chances in life.

Often, the number of days that pupils are absent accumulate without parents realising how many days have been missed.

Every pupil, in line with government expectations is expected to maintain an attendance of at least 95%. A 'good' level of attendance would be 96% or higher. It is the belief of many educationalists that missed time from school is detrimental to a pupil's education.

I am enclosing a copy of ****'s school attendance record. You will see that the attendance is now *%, which falls below the government guidelines. We acknowledge and appreciate that you inform the school of any absences however we hope we can work together to increase attendance to expected levels.

The Educational Welfare Officer monitors all pupils within the school whose attendance level falls below 90% because at that level they become known as a 'Persistent Absentee'. I have brought this to your attention now so that we can work together to ensure that ****'s attendance level does not fall below 90%.

If in the meantime if you would like to discuss this further or you feel that there is something we can do as a school to bring about a positive change, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Pitt

Head Teacher

SAC1 Attendance Increase letter

Name **Date**

Address **Ref: SAC1(i)**

Dear

Students Name: **Attendance Percentage** %.

We recently wrote to you informing you of ****'s attendance percentage. Attending school is essential for our pupils to make good progress, achieve their academic potential and consequently have better chances in life. Often, the number of days that pupils are absent accumulate without parents realising therefore we keep you informed by running an attendance report on a regular basis.

I am enclosing a copy of ****'s school attendance record. You will see that the attendance has increased and is now *%, which still falls below the government guidelines but will continue to improve each day **** attends school.

The Educational Welfare Officer monitors all pupils within the school whose attendance level falls below 90% because at that level they become known as a 'Persistent Absentee'. I have brought this to your attention now so that we can work together to ensure that ****'s attendance level does not fall below 90%.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Pitt

Head Teacher

SAC1 Attendance Decrease letter

Name **Date**

Address **Ref: SAC1(d)**

Dear

Students Name: **Attendance Percentage** %.

I am enclosing a copy of ****'s school attendance record. You will see that despite our previous correspondence the attendance percentage has decreased and is now *%, which, I am sure you will agree, is a cause for concern.

Attending school is essential for our pupils to make good progress, achieve their academic potential and consequently have better chances in life. Often, the number of days that pupils are absent accumulate without parents realising.

The Educational Welfare Officer monitors all pupils within the school whose attendance level falls below 90% because at that level they become known as a 'Persistent Absentee'. I have brought this to your attention now so that we can work together to ensure that ****'s attendance level does not fall below 90%.

I would like to meet with you to discuss this further and agree what else we can put in place to support and improve ****'s attendance. Please contact me on 01952 386390 to make an appointment to discuss this further.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Pitt

Head Teacher

Appendix 3: SAL(L) School Attendance Late Concern template letter

This letter is sent out when children are persistently late to school.

Name **Date**

Address **Ref: SAL (L)**

Dear

Students Name:

D.O.B

Class Group

Following a recent review of attendance it has come to my attention that **** has been late on a number of occasions. I am enclosing a copy of **** school attendance record for you.

There may be reasons why this is occurring, and I would like to meet with you to discuss this further and agree what else we can put in place to support and improve ****'s punctuality. Please contact me on 01952 386390 to make an appointment to discuss this further.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Pitt

Head Teacher

Appendix SAL 1: School Attendance First Contact

This letter is sent once attendance for a child is 90% or below.

Name **Date**

Address **Ref: SAL1**

Dear

Students Name:

D.O.B

Class Group

I am concerned to see that following recent register checks, ****' has a school attendance of *% which ultimately will have a detrimental effect on his/her achievement and learning at school. Attached is a printout of the school register showing this attendance level and I felt that I should draw your attention to it as soon as possible.

There may be reasons why this is occurring, and I will continue to monitor this situation. However, if no improvement is made, I will contact you again.

I am always willing to discuss any problems that your child may be having with regards to attendance so if you feel that it wouldhelp to discuss the matter with me then please contact me and I will make arrangements to discuss this further with you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Pitt

Head Teacher

Appendix SAL 2: School Attendance Further Contact

This letter is sent out if there is no improvement following the SAL1 letter.

Name **Date**

Address **Ref: SAL2**

Dear

Students Name:

D.O.B

Class Group

You will recall that I have contacted you before expressing concern over ****'s attendance. I have continued to review ****'s attendance and notice that there has been no significant improvement and that it still remains unsatisfactory. I enclose a copy of ****'s attendance record, showing an attendance level of *%.

Due to the amount of time **** has been absent from school, I have no other option than to inform you that any illnesses or medical conditions reported, for which evidence is not provided with either an official medical appointment card, copy of any prescriptions issued, or proof from your GP, will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

I must remind you the law states that:

"The parent of every child of statutory school age is compelled by law to ensure such a child attendsschool unless there is a reasonable excuse for non-attendance. Failure to do so may result in legal action being taken against you".

I am always willing to discuss any problems that your child may be having with regards to attendance so if you feel that it would help to discuss the matter with me then please contact me and I will make arrangements to discuss this further with you.

I will continue to monitor ****'s attendance, however, should there be no improvement, the Education Welfare Officer and local authority will consider what further support or formal attendance processes may be appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Pitt

Head Teacher