



Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations on school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE). We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, seeing it as a key part of developing student character. This includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student 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 students 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 DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) 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 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, students and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations, statutory duties and comply with the law on school attendance, 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 students, 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 students who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all students, but adapts processes and support to students' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students 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 students' 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 students, 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 Headmaster to account for the implementation of this policy

Attendance will be monitored by the Education Committee of the governing board.

3.2 The Headmaster

The Headmaster is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the Deputy Head Teacher/Assistant Head to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for students with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a student with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a student's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of students who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of students who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

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 students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance is David Durning and can be contacted via email on safeguarding@rgshw.com or phone on 01494 524 955.

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The School Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 9)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Headmaster
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headmaster/Deputy Head Teacher/Assistant Head (authorised by the Headmaster) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The attendance officers can be contacted via attendance@rgshw.com.

3.5 Form Tutors and Class Teachers

Form Tutors and Period 5 teachers 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 at 8:45am and 12:15pm. Teachers are also responsible for keeping a register for each timetabled lesson. All of this is recorded in the school MIS.

3.6 School Attendance Officers

School Attendance Officers will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls and forward emails from parents/carers to the head of year where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 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 or email the school to report their child's absence before 08:45 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
- 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 student's form tutor or head of year who can be contacted via attendance@rgshw.com

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session including private study, on time

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all students on this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day, at the start of each lesson and once during each afternoon session which is the period 5 lesson in each day. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending a place other than school
- Absent
- Absent – unable to attend due to unavoidable causes

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 student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a student 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 08:40am and ends at 3:30pm.

Students must arrive in school by 08:40 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:45. At this time, all present students will be marked as Present. Students arriving after 08:45 but before 09:10 will be marked as Late on the register (*please refer to section 4.4 Lateness & punctuality for further details*). The register for the second session will be taken at 12:10 and will be kept open until 12:25.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:45, or as soon as practically possible, by calling or emailing the school attendance staff, who can be contacted via attendance@rgshw.com or 01494 551 466.

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 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.

4.3 Planned absence

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

All requests for leave of absence should be emailed to attendance@rgshw.com and marked FAO: the Head of Year.

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

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

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Lateness policy:

- **First time late in a week:** If you are late once in a single school week, you will **not** receive an automatic detention. Your parents or carers will simply need to provide a valid reason for the lateness within 24 hours.
- **Second time late in a week:** If you are late a second time within the same school week, this will result in an automatic after-school detention, regardless of the reason.
- **Persistent lateness** (e.g. repeated weekly lateness over a half-term):
Will be referred to the relevant Head of Year and require **further intervention**, including parental meetings and support plans. Continued lateness may also impact a student's eligibility for certain school privileges and responsibilities.

Our goal is to work together to ensure everyone has a prompt start to their school day, allowing you to get the most out of your form time and lessons.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the student's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit or contact 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 student was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the student's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the student 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 7 below), as appropriate

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see the definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels on report card termly and in real time via the EdGen parent portal.

5. Authorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headmaster will only grant a **leave of absence** to a student 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 for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

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

What Qualifies as Exceptional Circumstances?

While not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of situations that may be considered exceptional circumstances:

- Family Crisis: A sudden and acute crisis involving a close family member, such as a serious accident or illness
- Bereavement: Attendance at the funeral of a close family member
- Religious Observance: Participation in a day of religious observance strictly recognised by the family's faith, up to a maximum of 2 days per year
- Significant One-Off Event: Attending a graduation ceremony for a parent or sibling or the passing-out parade of a parent in the armed forces
- Sudden Loss of Housing: A family being made homeless and needing to move unexpectedly.

What Does Not Qualify as Exceptional Circumstances?

The following are not considered exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised:

- Family Holidays: Cheaper costs, better weather, or alignment with a parent's work schedule are not exceptional reasons
- Birthdays or similar family celebrations
- Shopping for uniform or other items
- Looking after sick family members (this is classed as illness, not an authorised leave of absence)
- Appointments (medical or dental) that could be arranged outside of school hours
- Tiredness after a late night.

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is highly 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 weeks before the absence, to attendance@rgshw.com. The Headmaster may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5.2 Other reasons for authorised 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 student'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 for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a student is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the student is travelling with them. In these circumstances a student will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place

- If the student is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.3 Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The Headmaster will allow students to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons 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 student is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student 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.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We want our students to succeed and develop their skills. To do this, students need to avoid missing lessons and days of school as much as possible. As a school, we want to reward high attendance and not just penalise students for poor attendance.

Strong attendance will be rewarded with house points to aid a student's house performance towards the House Shield.

7. Supporting students with poor attendance

Our school will make use of the full range of support and 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.

7.1 Education supervision order

In cases where in school support and early help plans have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and will set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

7.2 Notice 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.

A notice 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 student attends school.

It will include:

- Details of the student'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, or prosecution considered, 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.

7.3 Penalty notices

The Headmaster (Deputy/Assistant Head, authorised by the Headmaster), 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, we will check with the local authority before doing so, and send the local authority 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 student
- 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

Each parent who is liable for the student'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 student, 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.

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 student must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

8. Supporting students who are absent or returning to school

8.1 Students absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Our school is committed to a compassionate and proactive approach when supporting students facing complex barriers to attendance. We understand that issues such as housing instability, family breakdown, trauma, or financial hardship can significantly impact a student's ability to attend school. Our strategy is built on a foundation of trust, partnership, and multi-agency collaboration.

Working with Families:

- **Early Intervention:** We prioritise early identification and open, non-judgemental communication with families to understand the root causes of absence.
- **Partnership Approach:** We work *with* parents and carers, not against them. A designated pastoral lead or attendance officer will act as a consistent point of contact, building a supportive relationship.
- **Multi-Agency Collaboration:** We will initiate or participate in meetings such as **Team Around the Family (TAF)** to coordinate support. With parental consent, we will liaise with external agencies, including children's social care, housing associations, and local family support services, to ensure a holistic support package is in place.

Removing In-School Barriers:

- **Pastoral Support:** We provide access to mentors, a school counsellor, and a dedicated pastoral team to create a safe and nurturing environment where students feel they belong.

- **Practical Assistance:** Where appropriate, we offer practical support through breakfast clubs, uniform and equipment assistance, and access to school resources to reduce financial pressures on families.
- **Flexible & Personalised Support:** For some students, a temporary, reduced, or hybrid timetable may be used as a short-term intervention to help them re-engage with school life, with a clear plan to return to a full timetable.

8.2 Students absent due to mental or physical ill health

We recognise that physical and mental ill health are valid reasons for absence and will support students and their families to ensure a successful return to school. Our primary goal is to balance the student's well-being with their educational entitlement.

Working with Families and Medical Professionals:

- We maintain regular, sensitive contact with parents/carers during a period of illness to monitor the student's well-being and plan for their eventual return.
- For prolonged or frequent absences, we will request medical evidence to authorise the absence and help us understand the support required.
- With parental consent, we will liaise with healthcare professionals, such as a GP, paediatrician, or **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**, to ensure our support is aligned with medical advice.

Adjustments and Additional Support:

- **Individual Healthcare Plans:** For students with long-term physical health conditions, we will create an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) in collaboration with families and medical staff.
- **Mental Health Support:** We provide access to our in-school mental health lead and counsellor. Adjustments may include access to a quiet space, temporary workload modifications, exam access arrangements, and staff support through emotion coaching techniques.
- **Maintaining Education:** If a student is well enough to learn we will reintegrate them using our EBSNA tuition team. For long-term absences, we will work with the local authority to arrange alternative provision, such as hospital school.

8.3 Students absent due to other barriers to attendance

We are dedicated to providing timely and well-chosen interventions for all vulnerable students to promote excellent attendance, in line with Ofsted's expectations.

- **Students with SEND:** We ensure that a student's **Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan** or **SEN Support Plan** is current and effectively implemented. The SENCO will work closely with families and teachers to make reasonable adjustments to the curriculum, environment, and teaching strategies to ensure the student's needs are fully met, removing potential barriers to their attendance.
- **Disadvantaged Students:** Our designated Assistant Head Pastoral & Pupil Premium Lead monitors the attendance and well-being of disadvantaged students. We can use **Pupil Premium funding** to provide targeted support, such as one-to-one tutoring, funding for co-curricular activities and trips, breakfast clubs, and uniform support, ensuring these students have the same opportunities as their peers.
- **Students Known to Children's Social Care:** Our **Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children** acts as a key advocate and point of contact. We work proactively with social workers, Virtual School Heads, and foster carers, contributing to Personal Education Plan meetings and ensuring school is a safe, stable, and supportive environment.
- **Students with Other Barriers (e.g., Young Carers):** We actively work to identify young carers and offer them tailored support. This includes flexibility with homework deadlines, regular emotional check-ins with a trusted adult, and referrals to local young carers' support organisations to ensure their well-being is prioritised.

8.4 Students returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

A successful return to school is crucial for a student's long-term well-being and academic progress. We manage this process through a carefully planned and personalised reintegration strategy.

- **Reintegration Planning Meeting:** Before the student returns, we will hold a meeting with them, their parents/carers, and key staff (e.g., Head of Year, Form Tutor, SENCO). The goal is to understand any remaining anxieties or needs and agree on a collaborative plan.
- **Phased Return:** A phased return, starting with a reduced timetable and gradually increasing hours, is often used to ease the student back into the school routine without feeling overwhelmed.
- **Academic Catch-Up:** We will assess for any significant gaps in learning and provide targeted academic support, which may include small group tuition or one-to-one support, to help the student catch up with their peers.
- **Pastoral and Social Support:** We will ensure strong pastoral care is in place, such as assigning a peer 'buddy' or a staff mentor for regular check-ins. We will also support the student in re-establishing positive social connections with their friends.
- **Regular Review:** The reintegration plan will be reviewed regularly with the student and their family to make any necessary adjustments and ensure the return to full-time education is successful and sustainable.

9. Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

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

Specific student 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.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify students 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.

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual students, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the students we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors & heads of year, to facilitate discussions with students and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding 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 student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate.

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student 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 students 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:
 - o Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - o Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - o Explain the help that is available
 - o Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - o 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 students. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 7, above).

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every three years by the Assistant Head Pastoral. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions
- Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

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

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

Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Student is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Student is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Student 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	Student is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Student 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	Student is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Student 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 student absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Student is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Student'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	Student 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	Student has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective student not on admission register	Student 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