# Standlake CE Primary School

# ATTENDANCE POLICY
# SEPTEMBER 2025

**Senior Attendance Team Responsible for Attendance Policy:**
**Penny McCarthy: Headteacher**
**Isobel Baldwin: Attendance Champion**

**Reviewed: September 2025**

**Review Date: September 2026**

This policy has been agreed in consultation with the whole school community's stakeholders, including the Governing Body, to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to ensuring high levels of attendance across all pupils. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Standlake CE Primary school, as part of the EPA, recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of pupil attainment and to give every child/young person the best educational experience possible.

**Working together to improve school attendance is now statutory guidance.** KCSIE 2025 explicitly confirms that the DfE's *Working together to improve school attendance* is now **statutory**, meaning schools must follow the guidance's expectations around monitoring and responding to absence, particularly when safeguarding concerns are involved

1.2 This policy is written with the above statement in mind and underpins our Trust's vision:

- **Aspiration**: We are ambitious for our schools and students we believe there is no ceiling on what can be achieved by anyone.
- **Collaboration:** We are commitment to working together to provide a supportive and inclusive learning experience that enables everyone to fulfil their potential.
- **Excellence:** Through aspiration and collaboration we will provide the highest standards of care and educational provision; giving students the best preparation for their future lives.

1.3 This document aims to support a whole school system that can:

- Prevent patterns of absence from developing.
- Promote good attendance.
- Provide early intervention, by using data to spot patterns of absence before they become persistent.
- Work with families to remove the barriers to attendance.
- Target support for persistent and severe absentees, with all local partners working together to re-engage pupils.

## 2. Vision and Values

Standlake CE Primary School, aims to

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and punctuality.
- Make attendance central to our school's vision.
- Recognise the interplay between attendance and wider improvement.
- Provide a dedicated Attendance Champion on the school's leadership team.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Resource attendance support appropriately.
- Set high expectations for attendance and punctuality of all pupils.
- Visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance throughout school life.
- Continuously work to improve attendance.

- Recognise children missing education can be a vital safeguarding warning.

## 3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Attendance is everyone's responsibility. All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community.

3.2 With reference to the Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance, responsibilities for key attendance roles are:

3.3 The **Governing Board** is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Governor who oversees Attendance is: Louise Weldon (safeguarding governor)

3.4 The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes and school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Ensure intervention re-integration plans are in place in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers.
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues make referrals to Oxfordshire Attendance Service.

3.5 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 is Penny McCarthy (Headteacher) and can be contacted via office.3127@standlake.oxon.sch.uk or by phoning 01865 300454

3.6 The **School Attendance Officer** is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7).
- 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 headteacher.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

The attendance officer is Isobel Baldwin and can be contacted via office.3127@standlake.oxon.sch.uk or by phoning 01865 300454.

3.7 **Class teachers** will:

Class teachers (including supply or cover supervision) are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, onto the school's attendance system by the close of registration each morning and afternoon.

3.8 **School Admin staff** will:

- Monitor the school attendance reporting system and enquire into reasons for absence where none has been given (N code).
- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system and/or
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.9 **Parents/carers** are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Contact the school (either through the school's reporting system or a phone call) to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day.
- Keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day .
- Notify the school in writing, if a pupil is changing schools.

If your child is absent you must contact (email or phone call) us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, by 8.30 am.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you
- If we are unable to have any communication with the parents to identify reasons for absence, a visit will be made by the Senior Leadership Team to the home of the child on the 3rd day of absence
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Headteacher if absences persist

- We will consider referring the matter to the County Attendance Team if attendance moves below 90%.

Our school telephone number is: 01865 300454
Our school office email is: office.3127@standlake.oxon.sch.uk

3.10 **Pupils** are expected to attend school on time, every day.

## 4. School Attendance and the Law

4.1 This policy draws upon 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.

4.2 The guidance is based on legislation, which sets out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance. These are:

- 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, Children missing education and Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

It has due regard for Equality Act 2010, The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, and operates in conjunction with the following school policies: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Complaints Procedures Policy, Behaviour Policy, SEND Policy, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy and Children Missing Education Policy

4.3 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

4.4 Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. The school considers each application individually, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, which must be requested in writing, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances.

4.5 At Standlake CE Primary School 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short" for the individual pupil, which outweigh the loss of teaching time

(as determined by the headteacher). With the term 'unavoidable' meaning an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

4.6 The school will not consider applications for leave during term time:

- At any time in September, in order for the pupil to settle into the new academic year as effectively as possible.
- During assessment and test periods in the school's calendar that would affect the individual.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.

4.7 If leave of absence is authorised, the school is not obliged to provide work for children to do during their absence.

4.8 Where absence was unauthorised and support has been provided but has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time), the Local Authority can issue fixed penalty notices. These must be in line with their code of conduct: oxfordshire Local Authorities will only take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort, where all other routes have been exhausted or deemed inappropriate. Schools, Trusts and Local Authorities are expected to work together and make use of the full range of legal interventions, rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution

## 5. Understanding Types of Absence

**5.1** Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'

**5.2 Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason, such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for the pupil before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

**5.3 Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings which may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If found guilty in court, the parent/carer will receive a criminal conviction.

**5.4** Unauthorised absence includes, however is not exhaustive:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained.

- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is recorded as an absence for the session.
- shopping trips.
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- their own or family birthdays.
- holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher- may result in school applying to the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the Local Authority.
- day trips.
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

**5.5 Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)**. Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), the school and the local authority will work together to put additional targeted support 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 and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches. The policy follows the guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 which states that there is connection between poor attendance and potential safeguarding concerns. Therefore repeated or prolonged pupil absence can indicate safeguarding risk.

**5.6** Particular focus will be given to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners.

**5.7** All partners will work together to make this group the top priority for support – this may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan, but it may also include consideration for an Education, Health and Care plan or an alternative form of educational provision where necessary to overcome the barriers to being in school.

## 6. Absence Procedures

**6.1** The school will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. The school will take the attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

**6.2** 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.

**6.3** The school will also record:

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

**6.4** Every entry on the attendance register will be kept for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:40am on each school day (see section 5).

**6.5** Parents will:

If your child is absent you must contact (email or phone call) us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, by 8.30 am.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you
- If we are unable to have any communication with the parents to identify reasons for absence, a visit will be made by the Senior Leadership Team to the home of the child on the 3rd day of absence
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Headteacher if absences persist
- We will consider referring the matter to the County Attendance Team if attendance moves below 90%.

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**6.6** The school will:

- Telephone or email parents on the first day of absence if they have not been provided with a reason for the absence. It is the parents responsibility to contact the school.
- Write to parents, if the child's attendance is below 96%.
- Invite parents into school to discuss the situation with the Attendance Lead and/or Attendance Champion, if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

**6.7 First Day Contact:**

The school operates a first day response to absence:

If your child is absent you must contact (email or phone call) us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, by 8.30 am.

If your child is absent, we will:

Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you

If we are unable to have any communication with the parents to identify reasons for absence, a visit will be made by the Senior Leadership Team to the home of the child on the 3rd day of absence

Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Headteacher if absences persist

We will consider referring the matter to the County Attendance Team if attendance moves below 90%.

If a child is absent from school a member of the school staff may carry out a sighting visit after 5 days.

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## 7. Punctuality and Lateness

**7.1** Punctuality is encouraged at all times. If a pupil misses the start of the day, or a lesson, this can be a deficit to their education and their emotional wellbeing. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill, which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

**7.2** A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using a 'L' code.

After the register is closed will be marked as absent, using a 'U' code

**7.3** The school day starts at 8.40am and registers are taken by 8.50am.

Children arriving after 8.40am are required to come into school via the school office. If accompanied by a parent or carer, the parent/carer will sign them in and provide a reason for their lateness which

is recorded. If the student is unaccompanied, the school will inform parents/carers. The Attendance Champion may undertake regular late checks.

**7.4** At 9.20am the registers are closed.

Children arriving after 9.20am are marked that they are in school, for safeguarding purposes, but this will **not** count as a present mark and they will have an unauthorised absence.

**7.5** If a child has a persistent late record, school will liaise with parents/carers in order to provide targeted support to improve the situation.

## 8. Monitoring Absence

**8.1** As part of Standlake CE Primary School's commitment to ensuring high standards, the school regularly analyses attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and to put effective strategies in place.

**8.2** The Attendance Champion, in collaboration with staff, will:

- Ensure that the admission register is maintained and accurately recorded, in line with regulations.
- Retain registers for 3 years from date of entry.
- Only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances.
- Set clear day to day processes for following up absences.
- Regularly update parents,carers on their child's attendance and absence.
- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns.
- Provide regular reports to class or form teachers to facilitate discussions.
- Identify pupils who would benefit from additional, targeted support.
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly and full year attendance data.
- Benchmark attendance data against local, regional and national levels.
- Devise improvement strategies, based upon the data.
- Monitor the impact of improvement work to recognise areas of success and development.

## 9. Supporting Families to Improve Attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

- Build strong relationships.
- Listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Support pupils and parents/carers to address any in-school barriers.
- Work with the Local Authority and other local partners to support families with out of school barriers.

- Intensify support where absence does not improve or earlier support is not engaged with.

## 10. Training

**10.1** All school staff receive adequate training on attendance. The school's continued professional development offer for all staff includes attendance updates and attendance information is included within the school's Induction procedures.

**10.2** All staff have an understanding of:

- The importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances.
- How to recognise and respond to attendance-related safeguarding issues, with clear responsibilities.
- The law and requirements of schools, including on the keeping of registers
- The schools' strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance
- The processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to pupils who need it.

**10.3** Dedicated attendance training is provided to any staff with a specified attendance function in their role, including administrative, pastoral or family support staff and senior leaders. This includes the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data and advice on supporting pupils and pupil cohorts to overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

## 11. Promoting Attendance

**11.1** Standlake CE Primary School maintains a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance where all pupils are expected to attend school on time and every day.

**11.2** For pupils who suffer with diagnosed conditions that sometimes prevent them from attending school on a full time basis, the school works with agencies to ensure that procedures are in place to ensure continued learning opportunities (under the Equality Act 2010).

## 12. Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

All families and pupils are supported to attend school successfully. As a result, the Attendance Champion aims to:

- Deliver a sensitive approach to individual circumstances.
- Develop good support for pupils with physical or mental health conditions.
- Provide specific support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

- Establish strategies to remove in school barriers for pupils who have a medical condition or a SEND.
- Ensure joined-up pastoral care is in place.
- Consider whether a time limited phased return would be appropriate.
- Ensure regular data monitoring of the situation.

(Please see the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and the SEND Policy for further information).

## 13. Part-time Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. If this was deemed necessary, formal arrangements would be in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents/carers. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, the school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and, therefore, this would be treated as an authorised absence.

## 14. Deletion from Roll

**14.1** Safeguarding all pupils is a key priority. To ensure that the school can carry out safeguarding procedures for all pupils on the school's admissions register, parents/carers are required to:

- notify the school in writing using the leavers form, if a pupil is leaving Standlake CE Primary School, other than at the end of year 6. This must include the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school.

- keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.

**14.2** Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are legally required to notify their Local Authority of every new entry to the admission register within five days of the pupil being enrolled.

**14.3** In addition to this, every deletion from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register.

**14.4** This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

## 15. Monitoring and Analysing Absence

**15.1** The attendance officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

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

The school cohort as a whole.

- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

**15.3** The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

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

**15.4** The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

**15.5** The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

**15.6** The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

## 16. In Summary

In relation to attendance, all partners should work together to:

**MONITOR** - Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

**EXPECT** - Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents/carers and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

**LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND -** When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents/carers to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

**FACILITATE SUPPORT** - Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents/carers to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

**FORMALISE SUPPORT** - Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

**ENFORCE** - Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

# APPENDICES:

## 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 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 |
| **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 circumstances | 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 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:<br>● In police detention<br>● Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or<br>● 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: Flowchart for Attendance monitoring (Escalation process)**

**Attendance Flow Chart**

Attendance falls under 90% (triggered by SLT)
Class Teacher/Tutor – (Verbal conversation with parent)

Attendance continues to fall - 1st Attendance letter sent

Attendance continues to fall – letter sent to invite in for Attendance Contract

Attendance continues to fall - Issue Notice to Improve

Refer to county attendance team
to issue Penalty Notice

All communication should be recorded on CPOMS under the category of attendance.

## EPA Trust Statement on Flexi-Schooling and Dual Registration

Since the pandemic, a small number of parents and carers have asked Trust Schools about 'Flexi-Schooling' or 'Dual Registration'.
This is when a parent or carer wants to educate a child partly at school and partly at home/elsewhere. Parents or carers are responsible for ensuring their child receives full-time

education at statutory school age. Flexi-Schooling must not be confused with elective home education (EHE).
Parents and carers have a legal right to choose to EHE, but they do not have a legal right to insist on a Flexi-Schooling or Dual Registration arrangement.

The discretion to allow any alternative approach or any transitional arrangements rests with the Headteacher.

EPA Trust considers that a school is best placed to deliver the complex demands of the National Curriculum and regards the social aspect of school as being important to help a child develop the social skills and resilience to lead a fulfilling life as an adult.

Therefore, our Trust will not support requests for Flexi-Schooling or Dual Registration arrangements.

September 2025

## EPA Trust Statement on Attendance Expectations

At EPA Trust, we are committed to ensuring that every child receives the education they are entitled to. School attendance is a legal requirement. We have a duty to equip our children with the best possible chances for academic success, emotional resilience, and social integration.

**The Importance of Attendance: A Moral and Evidence-Based Imperative**
Research from the Department for Education (DfE, 2022) and the Education Endowment Foundation clearly shows that high attendance is strongly correlated with higher academic achievement and improved long-term outcomes. Pupils with attendance below 90% are far less likely to achieve age-related expectations and are at increased risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) post-16.
Pupils who attend school regularly benefit from daily routines, peer relationships, consistent adult support, and structured social environments that are critical to their development. Conversely, irregular attendance often leads to increased anxiety, social isolation, and a decline in wellbeing—particularly for those already vulnerable.

**Our Expectations of Parents and Carers**
We understand that parenting is challenging, and asking for help can feel daunting. However, we expect all parents to engage with their child's school proactively and in good faith. Asking for support is not a sign of failure; it is a step toward resolution.
We offer access to a **Parent Support Advisor (PSA)** who can work directly with families to identify barriers, develop action plans, and provide ongoing emotional and practical support.
We also facilitate **Parent Ambassador Meetings**—by invitation—designed to foster open dialogue and community support among families facing similar challenges. These sessions allow parents to hear from others, engage with staff, and access local and in-school services.

**Attendance Expectations**
All children must be in school **from the beginning of the school day to the end**. Arriving late or leaving early not only disrupts their learning but also affects peer interactions and sets a precedent that education is optional. Inconsistent routines, especially among younger pupils, often manifest as behavioural and emotional dysregulation.
We do **not support or authorise 'flexi-schooling' arrangements**. Consistent, full-time attendance at school is essential for safeguarding, curriculum access, and equitable support.

**Mental Health and School Avoidance**
We acknowledge the significant rise in Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) and the impact of mental health on school attendance. However, **reduced timetables are not a sustainable or effective long-term solution**. Where used, they must be part of a **time-limited reintegration plan (maximum 5 school days)**, reviewed and directed solely by the Headteacher, who is best placed to assess readiness for return based on professional knowledge and safeguarding responsibilities.

There is **no alternative provision offered without an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)**. Where an EHCP is in place, decisions about the child's provision will be made through a multi-agency professional voice, including the child, parents, school, and relevant external agencies.

**Support Systems and Accountability**

We do not dismiss the real and valid struggles faced by many families. Our MAT approach includes:

- **EBSA Action Plans** tailored to individual children
- Engagement with a **Parent Support Advisor (PSA)**
- Structured reintegration and review meetings
- Referral pathways to mental health services (e.g., CAMHS, MHST)
- A graduated response model supported by SEND teams

We are accountable to our **Local Governing Bodies**, who receive regular reports on attendance data, patterns, support actions taken, and escalation processes. Governors will challenge and support school leaders to ensure that children are not written off or allowed to drift into persistent absence.

**Conclusion**

Our collective moral responsibility is clear: to ensure that no child is left behind. Attendance is not just about being physically present—it is about belonging, growing, learning, and flourishing. We stand firm in our expectation that all pupils attend school every day, fully supported by their families and our dedicated teams. Where challenges exist, support will be offered - but expectations will not be compromised.

Together, we can ensure every child has the future they deserve.