



Attendance Policy

2026 - 2027

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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 (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

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

Part 6 of the Education Act 1996

Part 3 of the Education Act 2002

Part 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments)

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

School census guidance

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Attendance is the shared responsibility of all members of the LGB. The link governors responsible for inclusion; safeguarding and curriculum will pay particular attention to attendance in relation to these roles and the questions asked during monitoring activities. All governors will hold stakeholders to account in their monitoring for improvements to attendance.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

These include:

- Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
- Making sure Beechwood 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 Beechwood's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- The governing board will review attendance and absence data for the whole school and for vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND, pupils with a social worker, children in care and young carers. It will challenge trends in persistent and severe absence and evaluate the impact of attendance interventions.
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, we have developed with school leaders, a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- The LGB is assured that all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- The LGB is assured that dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at Beechwood
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and authorising the attendance team to be able to do so

- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers.
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

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

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across Beechwood 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
- Ensuring the team liaise with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Ensuring the team build close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Ensuring the creation of quality intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Ensuring the delivery of targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Where an individual attendance or reintegration plan is required, it will identify the barriers to attendance, agreed actions and support, the person responsible for each action, intended outcomes or success measures, and a clear review date. The plan will be developed with the pupil and parent or carer wherever possible and reviewed regularly.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Iain Priestley and he can be contacted via 01753 520473.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring accurate registers for am/pm and lesson attendance
- Ensuring all parents are aware of Beechwood's attendance expectations and receive regular updates where attendance has dropped
- First day absence contact
- 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 SBC education welfare officers and feeder primary school attendance teams to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

- Ensuring all home contacts or contact attempts are noted on ClassCharts

The attendance officer is Indu Rehal and she can be contacted via attendance@beechwood.slough.sch.uk

3.5 The Family Liaison officer is responsible for:

- Reviewing day-to-day attendance and absence patterns for persistently absent and severely absent pupils and those at risk of becoming so.
- Maintaining appropriate records, preparing assessments and reports, and providing statistics as required for identified pupils
- Working with identified pupils' parents to help them to identify barriers and understand and fulfil their legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance.
- Leading in the development of a partnership between home and school.
- Calls, visits and meetings with any student/family with attendance falling below 90%
- Overseeing students on punctuality plans and attendance action plans
- Working with DSL and DSL team; inclusion teams and medical officer to ensure wrap around support for students/families
- Communicating frequently with the Inclusion hub leads for students based with them to improve attendance
- Liaising with local linked schools EWOs with shared families for joint support work
- Ensuring all home contacts or contact attempts are noted on ClassCharts
- Monitoring and actioning engagement-related home visits. (Following the lone working policy guidance)
- Working with the local authority SBC (Section 19, PA/SA)
- Collectively working alongside the attendance officer
- Point of contact for external agencies

The Family Liaison officer is Shelley Purchase-Hughes and she can be contacted via attendance@beechwood.slough.sch.uk

3.6 The Directors of Study and Attendance are responsible for:

- Reviewing the data set for their year group
- Including attendance data in all assemblies
- Ensuring form tutors are vigilant and complying with expectations (see 3.7 below)
- Overseeing those students in their year group with a dropping profile 94.9 - 90% including liaison with home
- Ensuring all home contacts or contact attempts are noted on Class Charts

3.7 Form tutors and class teachers are responsible for:

Form tutors:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office within the first 10 minutes of registration and lessons.
- Contacting home for those students with emerging attendance concerns (dropping below 95%)
- Celebrating attendance above 95% or rapidly improving to this level
- Ensuring all home contacts or contact attempts are noted on Class Charts

Class teachers:

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for all lessons on student arrival to lessons, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information on Class Charts immediately.
- Using school systems efficiently to notify of any missing students

3.8 School business team staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the form tutor/DOS teams where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Ensuring all home contacts or contact attempts are noted on Class Charts

3.9 Parents and pupils

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 timetabled session on time
- Contact Beechwood to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide evidence of any appointments/outcomes of appointments if requested by the attendance team
- Provide the school with more than one 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 their child's form tutor in the first instance who can be contacted via email/school phone line.

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session, on time.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and

absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

School day

- The school day starts at 8.40am and ends at 3.10pm.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40 am on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken by 9am after roll call has happened and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm and will be kept open until 12.40pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

- The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am, or as soon as practically possible, by contacting the school attendance staff.
- To report a pupil's absence, the parent must either call the Absence Reporting Line on 01753 787293, email the Attendance Team at attendance@beechwood.slough.sch.uk or text the Attendance Team on 07786 201170. This must be done for each day of absence.
- We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.
- To request a leave of absence, parents should email the Attendance Team at attendance@beechwood.slough.sch.uk with details of the date of absence, the reason for the request and any evidence.
- However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

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

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make an unannounced visit or inform the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving other individuals such as the education welfare officer, medical officer, inclusion team, DSL
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker, family support worker, youth offending team officer or other externally involved agencies
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals

Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the school may decide to issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as deemed appropriate in the context and in discussion with SBC Attendance officers.

Where attendance/punctuality continues to be a concern, further support and monitoring will be activated [see appendix 2 - Appendix 2: Daily/weekly/termly approaches.

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about any concerns with their child's attendance and absence levels.

- Attendance is shared daily through the ClassCharts parent app.
- It is also an important feature of reports home and parent evenings

Attendance will be discussed with parents and pupils using the following shared expectations:

- Attendance is excellent – 98%+
- Attendance is good – 95%- 97%
- Attendance is cause for concern – 90% - 94%
- Persistent absence- below 90%
- Severe absence - below 50%
- For clarity, a pupil is persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of possible sessions, and severely absent when they miss 50% or more of possible sessions. The school's percentage descriptors support early identification and do not replace these national definitions.

The '19 day' rule will be applied to support a shared understanding. 19 days or over absence from school from September - July will result in a pupil becoming persistently absent. When a student has had 2 days off in term 1, they will be warned that they are at risk of becoming PA for that term. At 3 days, the maximum per term to stay under the '19 day' rule, they will be contacted formally. This will be repeatedly termly:

Term	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
Informal contact days	2	2	2	2	2	2
Formal trigger days	3	3	3	3	3	3
Accumulative days	3	6	9	12	15	18

Any further absences above the cumulative number of absences will trigger support above the universal offer (see appendix 2). Any unusual patterns which remain below this level may also trigger further intervention or support.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

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

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

The headteacher may also agree to allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

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

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

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 two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website.

The headteacher will require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

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

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

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- 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

To request a leave of absence, parents should complete an [Application for Leave of Absence in Term Time](#) (Appendix 5) and email this to the Attendance Team at attendance@beechwood.slough.sch.uk. This application should be submitted at least 2

weeks before the first day of planned absence. Full details of the date(s) of absence, the reason for the request and any relevant evidence must be provided.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

If issued with a first penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

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

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

They will include:

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

Further information about penalty notices for parents taking children out of school, can be found here: <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/08/19/fines-for-parents-for-taking-children-out-of-school-what-you-need-to-know/>

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We celebrate good attendance daily through assemblies, form time, positive calls home, termly attendance trips or events, assemblies, parent events, end of term celebrations and Headteacher tea parties and Fab Fridays.

There is a section on attendance and punctuality in every parent bulletin.

New strategies are shared with staff through weekly briefings, as is the impact of their work.

Beechwood is committed to working with the local authority including in supported attendance contracts with parents. This would be used in conjunction with other supportive measures when it is felt that parents are not doing all that they can to encourage and insist on good attendance habits from their child/children and the attendance has fallen into persistent absentee levels.

Beechwood will use a graduated response to absence. According to need and the circumstances of the individual case, this will move from universal promotion and early conversations to targeted support and an individual attendance plan, formal attendance support or an attendance contract, a Notice to Improve where appropriate, and legal intervention where support is unsuccessful, is not engaged with or is not appropriate. Decisions will be proportionate, case-specific and consistent with the local authority code of conduct.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

We appreciate that there are often complex barriers to attendance. We, in line with the DfE guidance, aim always to work with students and their parents to alleviate any and all limits to attendance.

Beechwood recognises that pupils with a social worker, pupils subject to Child in Need or Child Protection plans, children in care, pupils known to Youth Justice Services and young carers may face additional barriers to regular attendance. Their attendance will be monitored closely, with timely information-sharing and joint working between attendance, safeguarding, the local authority and relevant external professionals, in accordance with safeguarding and data-protection requirements.

Please see Appendix 4: Beechwood response to DfE Jan 24 attendance campaign

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

At Beechwood we work closely with pupils and their parents absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or their SEND.

Adjustments can include temporary changes to timetables, arrival/departure times, interventions such as ELSA and access to the MHST. It may also facilitate time with the EP and/or SEND team.

Some students are also put under the wing of one of the three intervention units to support their reintegration back into school and to their lessons.

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

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

As stated above, a range of support can be accessed depending upon the needs of the individual. A phased return through the Explore inclusion hub is one approach that has proven to be impactful in ensuring successful reintegration to Beechwood. This will include young people with ERSA issues linked to post-covid and subsequent issues.

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) daily, weekly and termly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. See Appendix 3: daily/Weekly/Termly attendance monitoring

Specific pupil information is shared with the DfE through secure access to the data

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 and Trust..

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

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

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Ensure early identification of potential attendance issues through the monitoring of days off per term linked to immediate communication home.
- 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 DOS teams, inclusion hub leads and DSLs to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent

During these meetings there will be the opportunity to:

- Discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
- Explain the help that is available
- Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant

- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour regulation policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
I	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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances or pupil is pregnant.
C1	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil is participating in regulated performance or employment.
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil is on a part-time timetable.
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school or is in excess of agreed amount
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided within a maximum of five working days)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence or no reason has been given
U	Late after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody and detained for a period of less than four months
Y1	Unable to attend	Unable to attend due to transport not being available
Y2	Unable to attend	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption of travel
Y3	Unable to attend	Unable to attend due to part closure of the school
Y4	Unable to attend	Unable to attend due to whole site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend	Unable to attend as pupil in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend	Unable to attend in accordance with Public Health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend	Unable to attend due to other unavoidable cause
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned whole school closure	Planned whole school closure

Appendix 2: Daily/Weekly/Termly approaches

[illegible]

Attendance monitoring		
Key Activities		
Daily	Weekly	Termly
Roll call - greet on the gate	Attendance dashboard DOS/SLT	Impact of support on attendance reviewed
Registers taken	DOS form time/assembly data	Fortnightly updates SLT to HT
Check and chase registers	Update progress students on attendance plans	Termly checks HT to SEL & CoG
Check N and missing marks	Log all meetings/calls	Attendance plan groups reviewed and updated
Daily contacts for non-attenders	Update attendance of AP students	PA - 19 day check
Late detentions issued	Review p/t timetables for increase/end	Inclusion centre reviews - attendance 1st item
Check PA/SA students: contact made - call, meeting, home visit	Meeting attendance team with SLT links	SBC attendance meetings
	Patterms/concerns shared in staff briefings	SBC PA/SA working party
Daily report:		Whitehorse Fed Hub meetings - review impact and next steps
Whole school (all - SIMS)		"Half termly heroes" identified for assembly celebration
Year group (DOS team)		Attendance trip/event attendees identified
Intervention groups (leads)		HT tea party - attendance key consideration for invite
HT review Yr 7 and 8		Parental workshops
		Reinforced message through parent bulletin
As required:		
FPN unauthorised holiday paperwork	CME forms	New starters - reinforce importance attendance
EHE requests	Call in SBC for those meeting threshold	ClassCharts parent app reminders

Appendix 3: Beechwood response to DFE Jan 24 attendance campaign

National attendance campaign strategies and the corresponding Beechwood response

7 suggested strategies:	Beechwood Actions
1. Help create a national warm welcome to school for families throughout the spring by sharing the attendance campaign resources on your social media channels, newsletters and website.	a) Resources on website and X (Twitter) b) Shared in newsletter under recurring "Attendance matters" section and referenced in HT introduction
2. Make the Spring term a fresh start for children and young people struggling to attend school by taking a "support first" approach and sustaining efforts to engage families where absence is severe or persistent.	a) Key message in December and January assemblies b) January party - all attendance reset to 100% from 3rd Jan so all can earn the right to attend c) Support continues through the attendance team (now with EWO) and intervention hubs (Explore, compass, Horizon) and additional pastoral support through DDOS teams
3. Refer to the communicating with families to support attendance toolkit when communicating with families about attendance, to maximise your impact. The campaign we will also encourage parents and carers struggling with their child's attendance to reach out to their school as the first step of support.	a) Attendance letters all supportive alongside informing about the steps the school are taking and the support on offer b) Model transcripts for phone conversations with parents/carers c) "Moments matter" added to all email account signatures d) Suggested social media posts followed weekly from 10.1.24
4. Set clear expectations for parents and carers about what they need to do to support good attendance (e.g., phoning when their child is ill and having a back-up plan if their child misses school transport). And what you will do for them in return (e.g., phoning parents and carers to discuss a child's attendance where there are challenges and getting them into school for a meeting if there are concerns).	a) Expectations and procedures shared through school communication channels and repeated - assemblies; meetings; events; website; social media; newsletter b) Attendance letters highlight expectations c) Procedures at each stage - below 95%; below 90%; below 80% - are clear and shared with all. d) Daily communication - including meetings and home visits - from attendance team, DOS and intervention teams to key families on their monitoring list
5. Remind parents and carers of the NHS Is my child too ill for school guidance and the Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty's letter on mild illness and school attendance that says	a) Guidance sent out to parents in term 2 and shared on the website b) Reinforced to parents calling in/emailing regarding absences

a prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending school in the future.	
6. Help reduce the spread of infection in your school - remind staff and pupils of the importance of regular and effective handwashing and ensure spaces are well-ventilated. You can use your CO2 monitors to manage good ventilation. Tell parents and carers about the steps you are taking to reduce infection spread to offer reassurance.	a) Reminders in newsletters and assemblies/form times b) Staff briefing c) Site team ensure ventilation monitored and site kept clean - during the day sanitising
7. Sign up to share your daily attendance data with DfE if your school has not already done so and use the data to identify and respond to trends early	a) Actioned in term 1
In addition: Use of DfE blogs	a) Analysis of attendance end of term/key dates: moved non-uniform day to last day to encourage attendance. Have also moved the reward trip to a Friday so no absences the next day. b) Proactively calling those students who miss the first day back of the last term as parents "forgot" despite the many reminders c) Linking rewards to attendance - termly treats for those with good attendance; stars announced in assembly; winning forms for attendance celebrated in assembly weekly; mid-term heroes - chocolates for winning forms; Fab Friday and HT Tea party linked to attendance/improved attendance/Friday attendance d) Ensure all school events reference and link to importance of good attendance e) Working with partners (external and internal) to identify and support underlying reasons for non-attendance - asked SBC for further support and to ensure they are meeting statutory regulations as an authority

https://dfegovukassets.blob.core.windows.net/assets/Attendance%20campaign/Attendance%20campaign%20communications%20toolkit%20for%20schools.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Appendix 4

Application for Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances during Term Time

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as including:

The examples below are illustrative only and do not create an automatic entitlement to leave.

Each application will be considered individually, and leave may be granted only at the headteacher's discretion in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

- Funeral of a close family member, or another one-off family event only where the headteacher considers the particular circumstances exceptional
- Religious observance
- Sporting events or performing arts competitions at county or national level, if the student is participating
- Graduation ceremony of an immediate family member

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence.

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Pupil's Name:	Tutor Group / Year:
Home Address:	
I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school during the following dates:	
First Day of Absence:	Last Day Of Absence:
Date Returning to School:	Total number of school days missed:
Reasons for absence from school:	
☐ I am applying for my child to have authorised absence from school. I understand that if it's not agreed, then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a penalty notice or a summons to court for irregular school attendance. Please tick the box to confirm your understanding.	
Name of Parent/Carer Making application:	Signature of Parent/Carer:
Parent/Carer Email Address:	Parent/Carer Contact Number:
Date of application:	
Office Use Only	

Date Application Received:		Date Parent/Carer advised of outcome	
Headteacher's Decision:			