



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved: July 2026
Review date: September 2027

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

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

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

We will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality.

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 (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 School Attendance (Pupil 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, DfE (2026)
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

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- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit
- Children missing education, DfE (2025)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Parents/Carers

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/carers are expected to:

- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this to their child
- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am on the first day of the absence, and every subsequent morning of absence, and advise when they are expected to return. Messages can be left on the school answerphone (01444 233824), message sent via the MCAS app or email to the school office (welfare@southwayjunior.co.uk).
- 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 your child's class teacher, SENDCo or Headteacher

3.2 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time
- Speak to a trusted adult if they are experiencing issues with their attendance

3.3 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority

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Headteacher: Mrs V Smith

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

The Governor responsible for attendance is Mr Chris MacInnis.

3.4 The headteacher

The headteacher 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 pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

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- Submitting fixed-penalty notice referrals, where necessary, and/or authorising the school's attendance officer 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 plan (EHCP) 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

The headteacher reserves the right to unauthorise any absence taken in term time.

3.5 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the '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 Mrs Vanessa Smith, Headteacher, and can be contacted via telephone or email head@southwayjunior.co.uk.

3.6 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring registers have been completed correctly and accurately
- Completing daily attendance checks, including absence and lateness follow ups
- Ensuring all correspondence related to attendance is sent out in a timely manner and is recorded





Headteacher: Mrs V Smith

- 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 headteacher
- Working with Pupil Entitlement: Investigation to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher regarding submitting fixed-penalty notice referrals

The attendance officer is Mrs Kathryn Frost, Welfare & Admin Officer, and can be contacted via telephone or email welfare@southwayjunior.co.uk

3.7 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis using the correct codes on Bromcom
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality with all children, including communication with parents/carers
- Communicating concerns with attendance and punctuality with the attendance officer or designated leader

3.8 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it so that the attendance registers are updated accordingly
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Attendance Officer or Headteacher where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

Schools are legally required to keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. The register will be marked twice a day: at the start of the school day (morning session) and after lunchtime (afternoon 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
- Absent – unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

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

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

The school day starts at 8.35am and ends at 3.15pm. Registration is open from 8.35am to 8.45am.

4.2 Unplanned absence / Illness

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am, or as soon as practically possible, via one of the following: contacting the school office – 01444 233824 and leave a message on the absence line, send a message via MCAS, send an email to welfare@southwayjunior.co.uk or speak to a member of office staff.

Parents must contact the school on each morning for the duration 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. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher whether an absence is authorised or not.

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.





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 and appointment letters are attached.

Please complete the Withdrawal from Learning – Medical/Dental form, available from the school office or school website. Parents/carers must report to the school office to sign the child in/out.

However, we strongly encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible so that it does not affect your child's learning. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. If your child is absent for longer than the school deems necessary, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

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. Please complete the Withdrawal from Learning form, available from the school office or school website.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can contribute to further absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital learning and important messages from their class teacher. Every minute a child is late to school can add up to a lot of learning time over the year.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (between 8.45am to 9.00am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed (after 9.00am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U), and is classed as unauthorised absence

Lateness and punctuality will be monitored across the school. Where there are concerns about punctuality, the school will write to the parent/carer, including a copy of the child's registration certificate. If there is no improvement, meetings with the parent/carer will be held and it may result in a referral to WSCC.

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:

- Send parents/carers a text message and email in the first instance
- If no reason is then given, 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 main emergency contacts, the school may contact other emergency contacts listed





on the child's record and if we are concerned about the safeguarding or welfare of a child we may contact the police

- Identify whether the absence is authorised 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 Pupil Entitlement: Investigation
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team officer
- 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. The school will inform a pupil's social worker if there are unexplained absences from school
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the school will issue a notice to improve, attendance contract, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 6 below), as appropriate

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.1 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be done via school reports and child's attendance can also be seen on the MCAS app.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school without good reason may result in prosecution.

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

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 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 headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as significant family events such as a day off for a wedding or funeral.

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 as detailed above, holidays in term time will not be authorised unless there are extraordinary circumstances surrounding it.

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 one week before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office or school website. Evidence is required to support any request for leave of absence, i.e. confirmation of regulated performance.

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 – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil 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 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 a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.1 Non-approved term-time absence

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes (this list 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 the most appropriate code. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted 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. Evidence is required to support the request for leave of absence, i.e. confirmation of holiday booking. This absence may result in the school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or further action
- Day trips
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

As of 1st September 2013, there has been a change to The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations Act 2006. Headteacher's may no longer grant a 'Leave of Absence' in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Therefore, any such absences not deemed as exceptional circumstances will be unauthorised. Holidays or overseas trip absences in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking students away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday/overseas trip in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. Because of the damage to your child's learning caused by this, we do not authorise any holidays/overseas trips in term time, unless in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the headteacher.

Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

If we are unsure of the reasons for an absence, or if your child is ill either side of a holiday less than 5 days, we reserve the right to ask for evidence and unauthorise if necessary.





6. Supporting pupils with poor attendance

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

6.1 Support Meeting

Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent. We will invite parents to attend a support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may invite our Dedicated Schools Team link worker to work along with the family.

6.2 Attendance contract

We use attendance contracts as a form of attendance support.

An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and the school to address irregular attendance at school. An attendance contract is not legally binding, but it provides a more formal route where previous support has not worked or would not have been appropriate.

Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and the school cannot agree an attendance contract in a parent's absence.

Where an attendance contract would be an appropriate form of support, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent (and pupil if they are old enough to understand) to discuss how we can work in partnership to improve the pupil's attendance.

Where parents fail to comply with an agreed attendance contract, the school may seek an alternative course of action. In the first instance, this will include discussions with the parents to seek explanations and determine whether the attendance contract remains useful. Where there is further non-compliance following these discussions, the school may take further action.

6.3 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.

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 pupil attends school.

It 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 referral to Pupil Entitlement: Investigation 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 or referral may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Schools may choose not to offer a Notice to Improve if they do not expect it to have any impact on a parent's behaviour (e.g., because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

6.4 Penalty notices

The responsibility for issuing fixed penalty notices (FPN's) remains with the Local Authority with representatives of Pupil Entitlement: Investigation being the named Authorised Officer.

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 for any of the following codes:
 - G – unauthorised holiday in term time
 - U – arrival after the register has closed
 - O – unauthorised absence
- 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).

FPN's are used when a pupil has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (a school day is classed as 2 sessions, AM and PM). This period can straddle school holidays and academic years and the absence doesn't have to be consecutive. FPN's may also be used for less than this threshold should circumstances direct – for example, taking a child out of school for 8 or 9 sessions during an INSET or bank holiday week.

FPN's are to be issued to any adult defined as a parent under the Education Act 1996 and includes:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who is not a natural parent, who holds parental responsibility for the child
- Any person who is considered to have day to day care and control of the child





The payment must be made directly to the local authority. 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 per parent, per child within 21 days, or £160 per parent, per child 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 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, with no reduction offered for early payment

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent(s) in respect of the same child(ren) 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. This may include:

- The matter being presented directly to the Magistrates Court. A prosecution can result in a criminal record and fines of up to £2,500
- Matter being addressed via an alternative pathway with an Investigating Officer being allocated

In addition, absences in respect of 15 school days or more for a holiday, an FPN will not be offered and instead the matter will be referred directly to the Courts.

6.5 Referral to Pupil Entitlement: Investigation

In cases where support has been unsuccessful, we may refer the child's attendance to the Pupil Entitlement: Investigation team at West Sussex County Council.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

We believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

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

New parents are given a copy of the Attendance Policy and information on attendance is in the school's welcome booklet.

Good attendance is celebrated in whole school assemblies. There is an Attendance Cup that is awarded every term to the class with the highest attendance. Attendance is mentioned in the fortnightly newsletter and specific attendance newsletters are also sent to parents. Positive letters are sent to families when attendance has improved and attendance certificates can be used for children as an incentive. Other incentives will be used when necessary and be what is appropriate for an individual child.

Individual parents will be approached for a chat where there is concern about their child's attendance or punctuality.





8. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individualised early help plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners where appropriate.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#) and West Sussex's policies regarding supporting children with health issues, [Supporting children with ongoing health needs](#). We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

8.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance, mental or physical ill health or SEND

Our approach towards pupils with complex barriers to attendance is by working with families and identifying strategies for removing in-school barriers. Any reasonable adjustments and/or interventions should be timely and appropriate, well-chosen and targeted.

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.

Parents/carers should seek advice and support from the school if experiencing barriers in securing regular attendance. If the school has cause for concern regarding the reason for a pupil's absence, we may seek additional information or evidence from parents/carers regarding the absence, and make an outreach visit to the family home in order to verify the reason and offer additional support. It is our aim to work with families to ensure that attendance improves and in each individual case a reasonable adjustment may be made.

In developing this support, the usual processes relevant to any attendance case apply:

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- Understanding the individual needs of the pupil and family
- Working in partnership with the pupil and family to put in-school support in place and working with the local authority and other agencies where external support is needed (and available)
- Regularly reviewing and updating the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs

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

If the child has an education health and care plan, school staff should:

- Communicate with the local authority where a pupil's attendance falls or they become aware of barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Where possible agree adjustments to its policies and practices that are consistent with the special educational provision set out in the education health and care plan in collaboration with parents
- Where needed work with the local authority to review and amend the education health and care plan to incorporate the additional or different attendance support identified

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

Pupils will be supported back to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence. How this is done will be considered on a case by case basis but may involve the teacher making contact via phone, an informal meeting or a reduced timetable.

The school will work with families and other agencies including:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whilst supporting the underlying health issue.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments should be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place where needed and consider whether a time-limited phased return to school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.

WSCC receive attendance information from the school remotely and are aware when a child will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and local authority to agree any provision needed to ensure continuity of education for pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.





9. Attendance monitoring

Attendance and absence data (including punctuality data) will be monitored and analysed on a weekly basis so that patterns and trends can be seen and intervention and support can be delivered in a targeted way to pupils and families.

Analysis will also take place on a half-termly and yearly basis to identify patterns and trends. Graphs and statistics will be provided on a half termly basis to allow for benchmarking to take place against local, regional and national levels and identify areas of focus for improvement.

The Headteacher will report to Governors regarding persistent absence across the school. Triangulation meetings with Designated Safeguarding Leads will also happen to discuss persistent absence and lateness and discussions regarding strategies will take place.

The impact of school wide attendance efforts, including specific strategies implemented, will be monitored and the findings used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level. We will investigate any pupils whose data suggests that they are becoming persistently absent and not wait until attendance is below 90% (see section 9.4).

Pupil-level absence 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 weekly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- 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 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 pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis

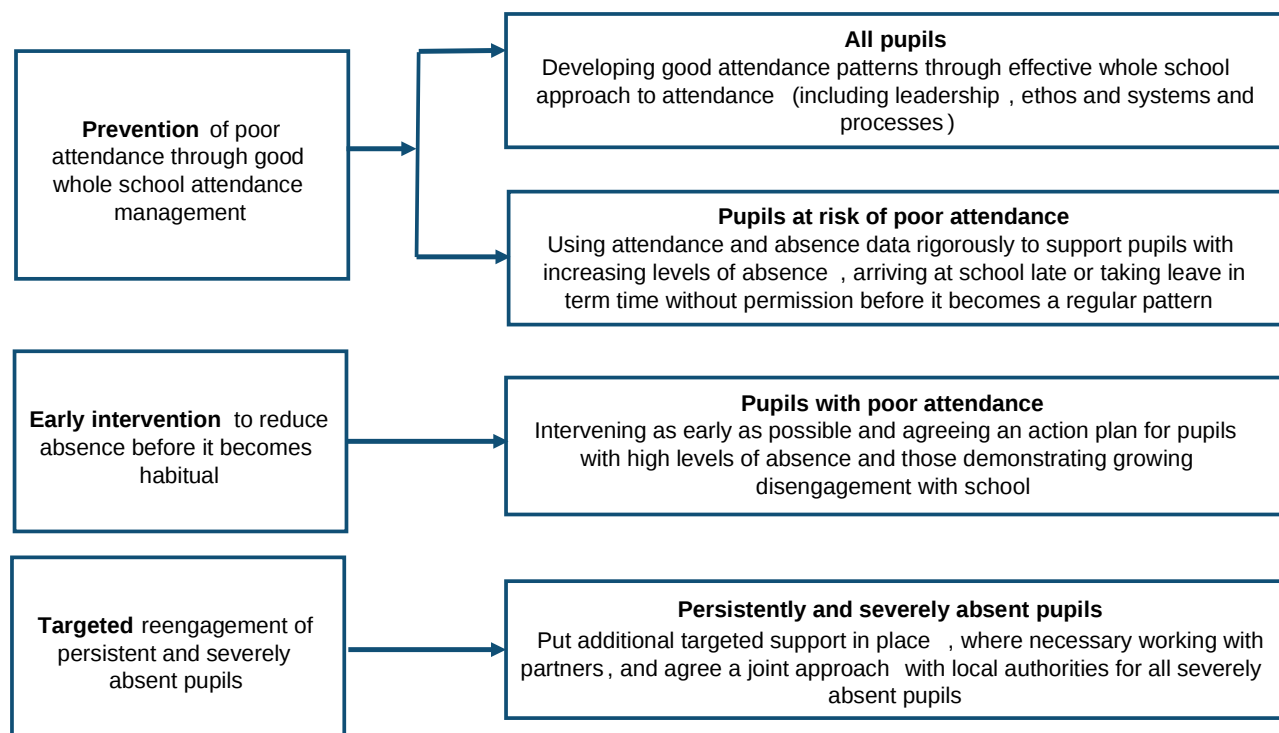
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- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 9.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

Effective school attendance improvement and management



9.4 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.

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level could affect a child's educational outcomes.





A pupil becomes a 'severe absentee' (SA) when their attendance drops to 50% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 190 sessions (95 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational outcomes.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will initiate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support, such as West Sussex Integrated Front Door (IFD).

Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Send letters to parents to inform them of their child's attendance percentage and the importance of improving attendance, working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant, this may include a voluntary early help assessment
- Refer to the Designated Schools Team (DST) link worker for support, guidance and advice.
- 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
- Putting in place an attendance contract
- Referral to the Local Authority regarding Implementing sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above). These can include a Notice to Improve and/or a Fixed Penalty Notice, social care involvement (especially if the absence becomes severe), and involvement of the Pupil Entitlement: Investigation team at WSCC, which may lead to prosecution





10. Further Information

10.1 Home Education

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from school in favour of home education. Parents must inform the school of their decision to home educate in writing. Once the school receives this notification, they will then inform the local authority and take the child off roll. It is important that the decision to home educate is discussed with the headteacher first and considered carefully. Talk to the school about any difficulties your child may be having; once your child has been taken off roll their place will be re-allocated and may not be available to your child if you change your mind at a later date.

10.2 Reduced 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 reduced timetable to meet their individual needs. A reduced timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviews with the child and their parents.

11. Monitoring arrangements

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

12. Links with other policies

This policy links to our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Behaviour 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
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: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • 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





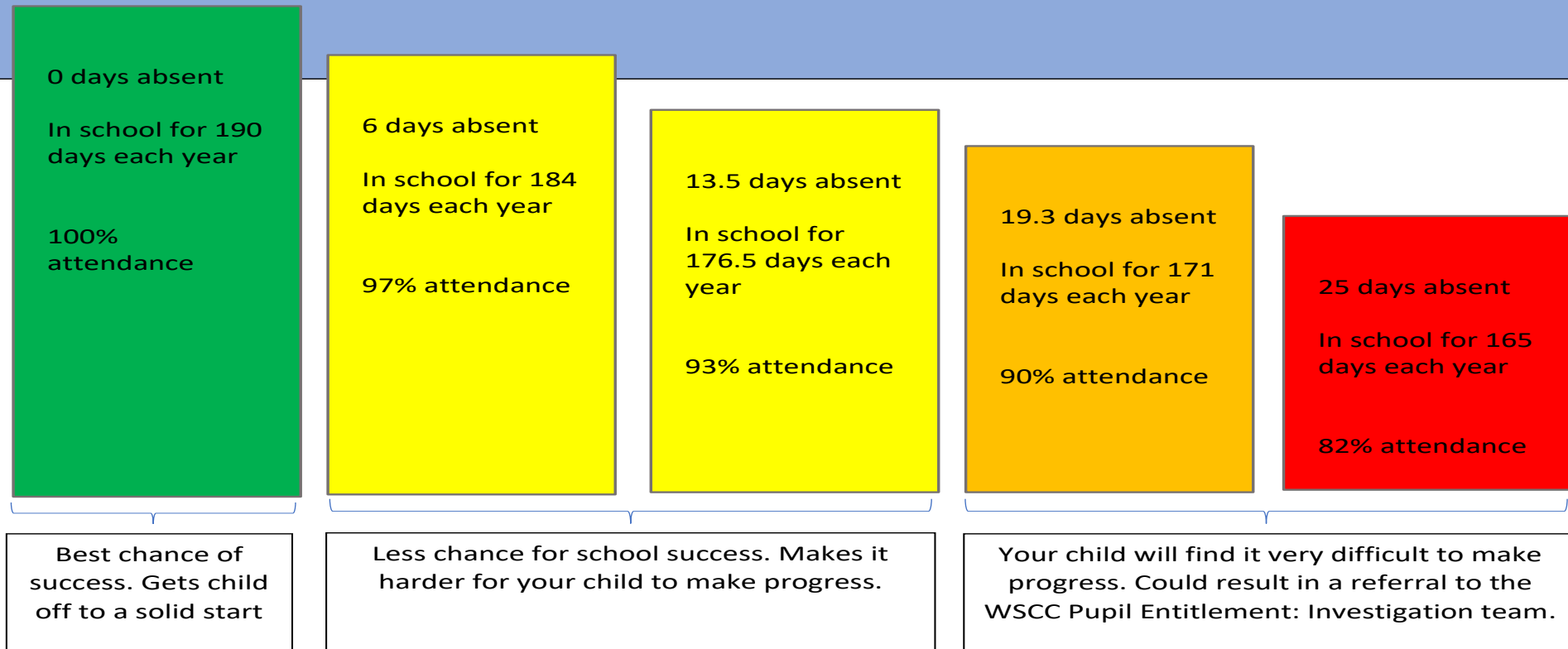
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays





Appendix 2: Attendance Chart

Your child will spend 190 days in school & 175 days on holiday each year



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Appendix 3: Is my child too ill for school

Is my child too ill for school?



Does your child have a high temperature (38°C or more)?

YES Keep them off school until it goes away.

NO Follow the guidance below.

Your child can usually go to school with a mild cough or cold if they are otherwise well. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day and give them the reason.

Should go in	Should go in (let the school know)	Seek treatment before returning to school	Keep them off (at first)
A cough, cold or sore throat Fine with slight cough or common cold symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat or headache, as long as they're otherwise well and do not have a high temperature. Threadworms Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.	Cold sores Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels. Conjunctivitis Fine unless they are feeling very unwell. Seek advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly. Head lice & nits You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP. Hand, foot & mouth disease If they seem well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly. Slapped cheek syndrome Once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. Let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.	Impetigo They'll need treatment from a pharmacist or GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school. Ringworm See your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment. Scarlet fever They'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics. Chickenpox Keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.	Ear infection If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away. Measles They'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily. Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears. They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system. Vomiting & diarrhoea Stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea due to illness for at least 2 days (48 hours).

Feeling worried or anxious: It's normal for any of us to feel worried sometimes. We may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping. Avoiding school can sometimes make a child's worries about going to school worse. If your child is struggling, please speak to school as soon as possible to explore available help. If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, you should contact GP or school nurse.

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Headteacher: Mrs V Smith

Appendix 4 – Non-Attendance Breakdown

Level			
Tier 0			
Green zone			
>97%			
Excellent School Attendance			
Level	Reason for Monitoring	School Actions	Staff
Tier 1	-Fallen below 97% -Repeated illness with no evidence provided -Late Marks - Unauthorised Absences -Unexplained absences -Patterns of non-attendance	-Letter 1 issued -Tier 1 parent conversation with class teacher -Pupils name to be added to attendance agenda - Early intervention considered as a preventative measure	Class Teacher Welfare Officer
Yellow zone			
93 - 97%			
Equates to 13.5 to 6 days missed per year			
Tier 2	All of the above and: -No improvement with attendance -Lack of Parental Engagement	-Letter 2 issued -Attendance chat with child class teacher. Record on CPOMS -Parent attendance meeting with AHT -Attendance Contract put in place -Continued monitoring in attendance meetings - Possible Early Help support offered/reviewed	Assistant Headteachers Welfare Officer Learning Mentor
Orange zone			
90 - 93%			
Equates to 19 to 13.5 days missed per year			
Tier 3	All of the above and/or: -Non-attendance is chronic -Significant concerns despite monitoring through previous tiers	-Letter 3 Issued -Parent attendance meeting with the Headteacher -Review Attendance contract and issue a notice to improve -Statutory Referral Discussion -Continued monitoring in attendance meetings - Early Help support to be reviewed or offered - Continued implementation of internal & external support	Headteacher Welfare Officer Learning Mentor
Red Zone			
< 90%			
Equates to 19+ days missed per year			
Tier 4	- Support not working or being engaged with - Significant number of unauthorised absences (see attendance procedure for thresholds)	-Refer to Pupil Entitlement for further intervention in line with Working Together to Improve School Attendance	Headteacher Welfare Officer
Pupil Entitlement Referral			

